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TODAY
10P

Major to call May 1 election today

Presidential style for marathon campaign

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

JOHN MAJOR will announce today that the General Election is on May 1 and pave the way for a marathon campaign that he hopes will turn round the biggest deficit ever faced by a governing party as it goes to the polls.

Cabinet ministers have been summoned to Downing Street to be told of the Prime Minister's plans this morning. Then he will go to Buckingham Palace to ask the Queen for a dissolution of Parliament, probably early in April, before telling the country from the steps of Number 10 that he is about to seek a fifth successive Conservative term of office.

The contest will begin immediately, with Mr Major staging a series of media interviews. He is then expected to travel to the first of his meet-the-people meetings, in the Home Counties. Ministers will maintain the momentum with more policy announcements, including one today from Ian Lang, the Board of Trade president, that he wants to raise £1 billion by selling off the airwaves used by mobile phones and radio-pagers.

The campaign, almost certainly the longest in political history, will be the first in Britain to include a head-to-head television debate between the two main party leaders.

Mr Major made clear at the weekend that he was ready to break with tradition and go ahead and Tony Blair declared his enthusiasm for the idea. The move confirmed that this will be the most presidential-style election ever staged in Britain. In spite of the threat of a legal challenge from Paddy Ashdown, there were strong indications last night that it would go ahead.

Mr Major was reported to be upbeat now the moment of truth had arrived and he was able to end the speculation. Remaining business will be pushed through the Commons over the next 10 days before the Easter break, after which MPs will go to the constituencies to do battle.

Mr Major's face-to-face debate call was the first important initiative of the campaign and provoked its first serious

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row, with the Conservatives insisting that Mr Ashdown should not be able to take part and the Liberal Democrat leader threatening action in the courts to block any programme if he was excluded.

In previous elections Mr Major's move would have been seen as a gamble, giving his main opponent a chance to strike a knockout blow. But lagging so far behind in the polls, Mr Major has little to lose and has seized the opportunity to take on Mr Blair.

He wants himself and Mr Blair to be able to interrogate each other, as well as taking questions from a panel of pundits and academics. A source close to him said yesterday: "He reckons the media have given Blair an easy time. He wants to have a go himself."

Although the Liberal Demo-



This must be the Major Blair debate everyone's talking about

crats do not like the idea, it is possible that Mr Ashdown would be interviewed separately during the middle of any debate so he would be given air time.

The Conservatives are opposed to Mr Major being taken on both by Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown. Brian Mawhinney, who decided the debating conditions with Mr Major during a late-night meeting at a hotel near Bath on Friday, said Mr Major wanted a "prime ministerial" debate between the two potential occupants of 10 Downing Street.

"People should have the opportunity to hear and listen to those two men being rigorously cross-examined and discussing the issues between themselves, because one or other of them will be prime minister at the end of the election, Mr Ashdown won't," he told BBC TV's *On the Record*.

He acknowledged the Liberal Democrat leader's "legitimate" demands to get his views across, but said he was "confident" broadcasters would be able to find a way for the Major-Blair debate to go ahead.

Mr Blair said: "We have of course been pressing for months and months for such a debate, so obviously we welcome this, assuming that it is a serious offer. I am perfectly happy with the idea of a debate between the Prime Minister and myself, which is why we have been pressing for it." He said it was for the broadcasters to work out whether or not the other parties needed to be represented.

Mr Major hopes the election announcement will instil the discipline into his party that it has so badly lacked in the last few years. There was another squall yesterday when West Midlands Tories indicated that they wanted to make immigration an election issue in apparent open defiance of the wishes of the party leadership. They plan to meet this week to work out an agreed response to what they see as Labour's plans to weaken Britain's immigration laws.



John Major snatches his final moments of pre-election relaxation at his home yesterday

BBC moves to accept terms on TV debate

By Jill Sherman and Carol Midgley

THE BBC last night appeared to be edging towards a deal with the Conservative Party over a televised debate between John Major and Tony Blair.

After frantic discussions between four TV channels and the three main parties yesterday, there were signs that the BBC was prepared to accept many of the terms which Mr Major wanted. The Prime Minister demanded there should be no public audience; Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, should not be allowed to participate; and that Mr Blair and Mr Major should be allowed to cross-question each other.

Early yesterday the broadcasting organisations signalled that it would be difficult to exclude Mr Ashdown from any TV debate due to broadcasting guidelines which call for impartiality. By the evening, however, the BBC appeared to take a much softer stance, hinting that there might be a way of giving Mr Ashdown a slot after the debate took place.

Sir Christopher Bland, chairman of the BBC, said: "We are in uncharted territory and the rules will have to be worked out carefully and, as far as they can be, able to withstand legal challenge."

Both Labour and Tory sources also suggested that the BBC were desperate to strike a deal before ITV came up with an acceptable proposal. The BBC, ITV, Sky and the independent producers of *Breakfast With Frost*, *Paradise Productions*, were formulating rival offers. ITV's bid is understood to be a Major-

Blair debate with a break in the middle in which Mr Ashdown would be interviewed. This is thought to have been rejected by Mr Ashdown.

The BBC's proposal is to have three separate debates featuring Mr Major and Mr Blair, Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown, and Mr Major and Mr Ashdown. It has no objections to the absence of a studio audience.

Sky is said to have suggested having the single Major-Blair debate but following it up with a three-way debate involving Mr Ashdown. Sir David Frost's company has suggested featuring all three leaders but allocating less time to Mr Ashdown.

One possible outcome is that the broadcasters would follow the US example, screening the debate on all channels simultaneously. Alternatively, the debates could be staged in turn by different channels and the recorded highlights be made available to the others.

An aide to Mr Blair made clear that Labour favoured the option in which Mr Ashdown would be interviewed in the middle of the main debate instead of being part of it. The party also called for audience participation, with the audience being allowed to ask questions and take their views heard.

The Liberal Democrats said they would agree to a three-way debate between the three leaders, or three separate debates. They conceded that the two debates with Mr Ashdown could be shorter than the one between the two main leaders.

NatWest faces inquiry pressure

Criminal investigators and civil City watchdogs will come under mounting pressure this week to launch formal investigations into the £90 million "blackhole" uncovered at the investment banking arm of NatWest two weeks ago. **Page 48**

Thousands in Brussels protest

The pain of the Continent's unemployment spilled on to the streets of Brussels yesterday when tens of thousands marched in protest at the European Union's failure to protect jobs in the face of the free market. **Page 14**

The Times on the Internet
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>

Europe ready to send token force to Albania

By Charles Bremner in Apeldoorn and Michael Evans

THE European Union held back yesterday from any large-scale intervention in Albania, agreeing only to offer a team of civil and military advisers.

An advance team of officials will leave for Tirana today to prepare for the advisory mission, whose aim will be to help with building up Albania's police and military infrastructure.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, meeting his European counterparts at Apeldoorn in the Netherlands, said the number of advisers would be "dozens", not hundreds.

The 15 ministers were divided, with some favouring military intervention to restore order and others who backed a more modest approach.

Despite pressure from Italy and France to send a military peacekeeping force of up to 3,000 troops to secure Tirana airport, government buildings

and foreign embassies, Britain, Germany and Sweden insisted on only a limited EU mission.

Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, warned that Europe could not get involved "in another adventure". Yugoslavia had been a lesson for the EU, he said.

The ministers had met after a request by the Albanian Government for troops to restore order, and a suggestion by Franz Vranitzky, the former Austrian Chancellor who headed a team sent to Albania by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, that troops and police be sent in to quell the violence.

In London, Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, said there were no plans to send troops. Speaking on GMTV's *Sunday Programme*, he said: "I am not in a hurry to offer up new targets for these irresponsible people."

The Foreign Office reported that 40 Britons still remained in Albania, about 15 of whom were unaccounted for. But some of them may have left without reporting to the British Embassy, the Foreign Office said.

As the foreign ministers met in Apeldoorn, American Marines stormed out of CH53 Super Stallion helicopters onto Golem Beach six miles south of the Albanian port of Durres to rescue American, Turkish and Italian citizens from the continuing anarchy.

Two Sea Stallions lifted foreign nationals out to safety on ships standing by in the Adriatic. The Marines, who carried automatic rifles, anti-tank weapons and night-vision goggles, used rifle-bursts to beat off Albanians trying to board the aircraft to escape anarchy.

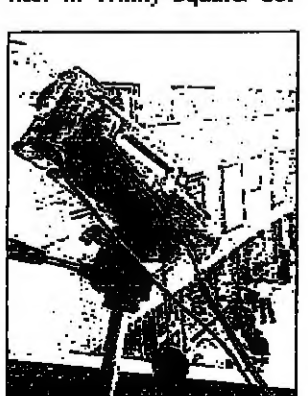
Child vandals, page 12
Leading article, page 21

Cameras net snooze view of the world

By Nick Nuttall and Michael Horsnell

LIVE action from the centre of Britain's oldest recorded town is being secretly relayed to a potential audience of 77 million surfers of the Internet around the globe.

Anyone with a computer may now thrill to the footage of shoppers, delivery vans, the occasional drunk, wandering cat and patrolling police officer in Trinity Square, Col-



Colchester: the way it looks to surfers

chester. The development is the latest and, some say, the least sparkling, aspect of a growing pastime of computer voyeurism.

Cameras are being aimed at waters in California, Brazilian beaches and the slopes of ski resorts so that visitors can check out the surf, see if the beach is packed, or whether the snow looks good. It also allows them to watch another world go by.

Some of these private cameras, dubbed windows on the world, are showing bizarre live footage ranging from a busy traffic intersection in New York city, an ant hill, people reclining in their living rooms, and even somebody's lavatory in America.

While some feel these sites hold a strange fascination, others dismiss them as the high tech equivalent of the dentist's aquarium.

This weekend citizens thronging the north Essex
Continued on page 2, col 5

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With Peter Riddell, William Rees-Mogg and Ballot 97: Transport

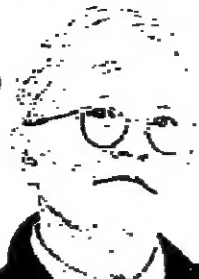


Tomorrow

MEN ONLY
Alexander Stuart on dangerous liaisons
Laurie Taylor on academic Don Juans

Wednesday

HOCKNEY AT 60
Richard Cork meets the first man of British art
Plus: guide to the summer's top 50 festivals



Thursday

BOOKS
Norman Stone on Albert Speer's false remorse
Derwent May on the letters of Arthur Ransome

Friday

POP
Alan Jackson meets a Baywatch babe turned country star



Saturday

LEONARDO DI CAPRIO
Giles Whittell on a Romeo for the MTV generation in The Magazine



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Major's new battle cry will say that Europe isn't working

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Tories are to launch a new Eurosceptic strategy based on the theme "Europe isn't working" as a key element of their election campaign.

After a fierce battle with Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, the Prime Minister has won their backing for a campaign to contrast rising unemployment and higher spending on the Continent with Britain's improving economic record.

At a meeting last month, the Chancellor and the Deputy Prime Minister ruled out any campaign which could be construed as overtly anti-European. Mr Clarke in particular opposed advertisements which portrayed Labour as the pro-European party and the Tories as more sceptical. He is said to have dug his heels in over certain slogans which were to have appeared on the ill-fated lion posters, such as "Euro Labour, Euro taxes" or "Euro Labour, Euro job losses".

But after a heated debate, he agreed to a compromise strategy in which the Tories could focus on key areas where Britain has been more successful than Europe, and highlight the danger of Labour adopting specific European policies which could ruin it all. One party source argued that significant progress had been made at the meetings: "Six months ago, Clarke and

Heseltine would just not have agreed even to pinpointing unemployment or spending in Europe."

When the latest British unemployment figures are announced on Wednesday, ministers will also point to the dramatic rise in unemployment in Germany over the past six months. They will pepper speeches with the fact that the average level of unemployment across the Continent is higher than Britain, and that if public spending levels in Europe were translated to Britain every family would pay £2,300 extra in taxes. The extra tax burden is calculated on the premise that spending

Tories point to jobs record

ALMOST alone among her major European partners, Britain can point to an exemplary record in tackling rising unemployment, say ministers. The jobless rate of 4.5 per cent is among the lowest in Europe - on a par with The Netherlands and Denmark. The figure in Germany leapt last month to 4.8 million. In February 120,000 Germans lost their jobs bringing the unemployment rate to 12.5 per cent. France has a similarly high level of unemployment - 12.4 per cent, with Spain at 22.2 per cent.

on the Continent is on average 50 per cent of GDP whereas in Britain it is nearer 40 per cent of GDP.

Senior Tories will then suggest that once Labour adopts the Social Chapter and the national minimum wage, which has been introduced by most European countries, the number of jobs in this country will soar. They will also highlight Tony Blair's inexperience as a negotiator when it comes to settling the inter-governmental conference in Amsterdam, and suggest that he will be unable to stand up to the other nations.

Although Mr Clarke and Mr Major have agreed to focus on the domestic economy this week, strategists do not rule out new advertisements on Europe once the official election campaign starts. They are still confident that the Eurosceptic card will be a vote-winner, and are anxious to ensure that the new theme becomes a constant feature of campaign speeches and press conferences.

Party advisers also concede that the Tories can no longer gain any electoral advantage over sceptical line on a single currency, because Labour's position is almost identical to their own. Mr Clarke has prevented Mr Major from hardening the position to rule out a single currency, and the "wait and see" approach will now be held through the election campaign.



Heads I win: Alan Howarth, the Labour candidate, in Newport East yesterday

Defector Howarth is selected for safe Labour seat

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ALAN HOWARTH, the MP who defected from the Conservatives to Labour, was yesterday the clear winner of a selection contest for the candidacy of the safe Labour seat of Newport East.

Mr Howarth, currently MP for Stratford on Avon, a safe Conservative seat, won more than 50 per cent of the vote after a crowded hustings meeting in Newport yesterday afternoon. The former Tory junior education minister, who joined Labour on the eve of the 1995 Tory conference, yesterday won 141 votes, against Reg Kelly, a local candidate, who gained 58 votes and Bryan Davies, the Labour frontbencher, with 49.

Mr Howarth, who failed to be selected for Wythenshawe, last year, was put on a shortlist of four after Roy Hughes, the sitting MP, decided last month to retire. Mr Davies's current seat of Oldham Central & Royton is disappearing under boundary changes.

A delighted Mr Howarth, 52, said last night that the result was "beyond his wildest dreams". He said that he had talked to most of the 400 constituency members either on the telephone, or face-to-face raising the issues of social injustice and division.

"I came to the Labour Party because I was angry and ashamed of so many of the things taking place in this country - the widening inequality, the deepening poverty and the neglect of public services like health and edu-

cation. There are millions of people who share that anger and will be moving across to support Tony Blair, new Labour and the first-rate team of shadow ministers ready to start the long and difficult task of turning things around," Mr Howarth said.

Mr Blair hailed "Mr Howarth's win as a 'quite brilliant' result. 'I believe today's decision is one of the most significant events in the three years since I became leader, because it really does show that the changes in our party go deep,'" Mr Blair said. "I am really pleased for Alan. He is a courageous and talented man."

Yesterday Ron Davies, the Shadow Welsh secretary, denied any suggestion that Mr Howarth had been "parachuted" into South Wales, a rock-solid Labour heartland. "Today's selection has been perfectly fair and perfectly democratic," said Mr Davies.

The attention will now focus on Bryan Davies. Efforts will be made to find a seat for him before polling day. Once the campaign has started the Labour leadership is entitled to impose a candidate.

It has been rumoured that Derek Foster, MP for Bishop Auckland, might retire and be given a seat in the Lords, and that Sir Geoffrey Lofthouse, the Deputy Speaker, will announce his retirement from his Pontefract and Castleford seat. At least one other MP is considering standing down before the imminent general election.

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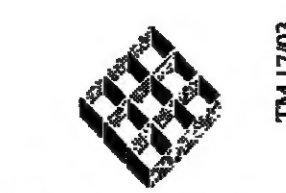
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Surfers net snooze view of the world

Continued from page 1
garrison town were less than sure they wanted to be beamed around the world from the camera in Pelhams Lane.

Tom Hunter, 62, a caretaker from Colchester, said: "No-body should be subjected to this sort of thing unless they are asked first."

But Gilbert Morapedi, 32, who is taking a Ph.D in the agrarian history of Botswana at the University of Essex, disagreed. He said: "The view is not private because this is a public thoroughfare. But I can think of better things to watch."

The camera has been set up as a pilot project by Actual Size Internet Solutions of Brightlingsea, Essex, at the office of their strategic partners, Aspects Internet Access. Jamie Clary, managing director of Action Size, said: "Any-one with time to kill would want to look in on Colchester... it is like sitting in a street café watching the world go by."

Phil Pfisterer of EarthCam, a company based in Hackensack, New Jersey, which is monitoring the development of so-called Street or Web Cams said there were now thousands of private cameras relaying live images. They raised the possibility of "pirate" broadcasts from major sporting events, such as Wimbledon, or they could be used to keep an eye on the babysitter from the office.

Recently BT pulled the plug on one camera permanently showing footage of a Cabinet minister's house. Pornographic "keyholes" would also be banned, said BT.

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Students will be told to expect tuition fees

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

BRISTOL University will warn students starting degree courses from 1998 that it may charge for tuition fees at any stage during their studies.

Nearly 20 leading universities agreed before Christmas to give early warning of a possible charge next year to avoid the possibility of legal action by students who applied for places thinking that tuition would be free. All but six have changed their minds.

Bristol will join Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and Nottingham Universities and the London School of Economics in a breakaway group. Other apparent enthusiasts for "top-up" fees, such as University College London, have decided to put off any change until 1999.

Sir John Kingman, Bristol's Vice-Chancellor, has written to head teachers and principals explaining that the introduction of fees may be necessary to preserve the university's quality. However, Sir John added: "I stress that we have made no decision to charge such a fee, but present uncertainties in the funding of higher education have caused the Council of the University to decide that it would be failing in its duty if it did not take precautionary measures." A final decision will be taken in the autumn, when government spending priorities become clear.

Existing plans, which Labour has said it will honour if it wins the election, allow for a reduction of 7.5 per cent in state funding for each student over the next three years. Although last year's Budget restored some of the cuts in university spending, Sir John said that government support for higher education would drop by £263 million by 1999-2000.

Other universities are wary of threatening fees, however, in case they frighten off prospective students. Some believe that a Labour government would ensure that they did not profit from ending free tuition. David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, has raised the prospect of reducing the grants of universities that introduce fees.

Some universities, such as Sheffield and Kent, have reversed their plans after drafting prospectuses that included a warning of possible fees. Students on both campuses have claimed that their protests brought about a change of heart.

The National Union of Students has promised publicity campaigns against universities that do not rule out fees for next year. A spokeswoman said the union was still engaged in talks with the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, discussing alternative sources of funding, but would ensure that potential applicants were aware of where there was a threat of fees.

Most vice-chancellors are pinning their hopes on Sir Ron Dearing's review of higher education to persuade a new government to make up the funding gap. Both Labour and the Conservatives oppose top-up fees, but have made it clear that students will be expected to make some contribution towards the cost of higher education in future.

Labour warns of schools cash crisis

LABOUR will claim today that one local authority in three will have less money to spend on schools in the new financial year, even before allowing for inflation and rising numbers of pupils (John O'Leary writes).

A survey of the 132 education authorities suggests that state schools will receive almost £100 million less in 1997-98 if councillors stick to the Government's spending plans. Metropolitan areas and the new unitary authorities will be hardest hit. Labour's calculations compare estimates of the current year's spending with the plans in the last Budget. In practice, because local authorities set their own priorities, spending is certain to exceed the Government's allocation.

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They are such different men — Blair is a barrister, Major a life insurance salesman

Television debate is all about looks, not about words

Matthew Parris looks forward to a talent night on television

It's the format, stupid. Who gains the advantage in any televised head-to-head between John Major and Tony Blair depends critically on the setting.

These are such different men. Each possesses what the other lacks. The format best designed to John Major's strengths will be poorly suited to Tony Blair's personal style; and the best catwalk for Mr Blair the worst for Mr Major. Tony Blair is a barrister and John Major is a life insurance salesman.

Do not be fooled by the Labour leader's informality: it is a device. His instinct is to project and he projects with skill and charm. In any gathering, Blair's undertone and body language are not to draw others around as equals, or invite dialogue: it is to step back, put a little distance between himself and the crowd and address them as an audience. This is not a style which sips brandy with you.

Blair is careful not to hector and is never pompous, but there is always an invisible row of footlights in front of him. He can prosecute or defend and excels at both, but what he cannot do is pass the time of day. This is the actor to play the Messiah or Lucifer, Iago or Othello, Don Carlos or the Grand Inquisitor.

So long as Mr Blair retains his command, he is almost invincible. His ability to project a vision — to inspire — is formidable.

His vulnerabilities are of a different kind. There are three. When the first squashed tomato hits the Armani suit or the first irreverent giggle interrupts from the back, or when he trips, Mr Blair will be in uncharted water.

Second, though quick and articulate he sometimes lacks (as professional advocates often do) the security which comes from a real grasp of one's case, and intellectual confidence to it. A format which places him — so to speak — in an Oxbridge tutor's book-lined study, defending an essay which was perhaps slightly too hastily

cobbled together, could have him sweating. Third, like many great orators, he is well displayed at 30 yards. An impetuous camera-shot on the perspiring brow, the defensive glance or the nervous mouth, could unsettle viewers.

Were I negotiating this broadcast on Tony Blair's behalf, I would want him standing up, in a good-sized studio, some distance from a herd of questioners, "chairing" himself, and calling each to put their question.

The more questioners, the better: I would suggest a dozen or more. I would resist the idea that Mr Major be allowed to cross-question him directly.

A very different format would suit the Prime Minister. As a performer, Mr Major operates in two such different modes that he can almost seem to be two separate people. He can chat with us, or he can address us. He is superlative at chatting. At addressing people he is abysmal. Where I would hire Tony Blair to address and motivate my insurance salesmen's conference, it is Mr Major I would put on the doorstep with the life policies themselves.

Locked into a detailed and constructive discussion about any plan for action, John Major comes across as confident, deft, knowledgeable and pleasant.

He possesses the persuasive, man-to-man skills of any great counsellor (or, indeed, confidence trickster). He is seen to best advantage leaning — actually or metaphorically — to-

wards you, drawing you in. It is an intimate manner which breathes conviction.

But set him apart from his audience — place him, blinking, in the footlights — make it "me" versus "them", and the Prime Minister fails either to project or to defend himself convincingly from attack. Projecting, he becomes wooden. Defending, he sounds aggrieved. His throat tightens and his voice rises to an angry drone, like a distant chainsaw.

Thrown on to the back foot, John Major's face freezes and he becomes unable to smile, relax, or even to show real anger. He begins to look like a man who will not own up.

Were I negotiating this head-to-head on John Major's behalf, there would be no stage, no herd and no studio. The encounter would take place in scholarly circumstances of quiet hospitality and I should want no more than three or four questioners.

Major would be seated within a yard of Blair and amongst, not in front of, the questioners. All would be in armchairs, nobody enjoying any special furniture or pride of place. The ambience would be that of coffee in the library, after dinner: reasonable men and women trying to sort out difficult matters.

And I should insist that Major be permitted to put direct questions himself to Blair. Major's tone would be relentlessly affable. He would simply ignore finger-wagging or censorious behaviour from Blair as though above it, his attitude that of a senior colleague, trying (with-out patronising) to explain to a rather chippy junior that things were not as simple as he supposed. If John Major could carry that armchair in his imagination, and address us from it regardless of his real surroundings, he will always carry conviction. And so long as Tony Blair can feel that spotlight and see that audience, he will give his best, even from an armchair.



Major can chat with us, or he can address us. He is superlative at chatting. At addressing he is abysmal.



Blair can prosecute or defend and excels at both, but what he cannot do is pass the time of day.

Pitfalls line the American way

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

IT IS 37 years since Richard Nixon lost the first televised presidential debate in American history, but his performance has haunted candidates for the White House ever since.

While British politicians are more accustomed to the challenges of parliamentary questions, the risks of presidential-style televised debate are manifold. The American techniques are certain to be under the closest scrutiny by John Major, Tony Blair and their image consultants.

The 1960 studio exchange between Mr Nixon and John Kennedy, viewed by 70 million Americans, not merely defined every future campaign but offered television an unprecedented opportunity to create a lasting perception of the candidate. In stark contrast to his sun-tanned and relaxed Democratic opponent, a pallid Mr Nixon appeared on the set eight pounds underweight from a stay in

hospital and perspiring heavily under the studio lights. His make-up barely concealing the shadow of a beard, which led one wit to dub him Lazy Shave, the Nixon package contributed to an overall impression of the Republican as sinister and shifty-eyed.

To make matters worse, Mr Nixon had injured his knee as he stepped from the limousine, forcing him to shift weight to minimise the pain. As he leaned forward on the podium, the ill-fitting grey suit which blended with the backdrop, fell forward on one shoulder. He glanced repeatedly at a clock off stage.

On the advice of a television producer, Mr Kennedy, dressed in a fitted blue suit, maintained eye contact with the camera and had trimmed his bushy hair to counter criticism that he was too young to lead the nation. Those who heard the debate on radio felt that Mr Nixon had won. For the television audience, how-

ever, Mr Kennedy was the clear victor. The Republican never recovered while Kennedy's support multiplied from that moment.

Preparation for the presidential debates has since become a grand production worthy of Hollywood. Aware of the overwhelming power of television, candidates jockey for visual advantage in pre-debate negotiations. In 1960, discussion had centred on the temperature in the studio. Nixon aides had argued that thermostats be turned down to lessen their candidate's tendency to sweat. The Kennedy men had increased the heat.

Throughout this century, the taller candidate has always been the safest bet to win the election. Facing Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter used every means at his disposal to reduce his opponent's 3½-inch height advantage. He is even reported to have worn lifts in his shoes during the debates.

Call to arms for longest battle

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE countdown to a May 1 election is under way. John Major will fire the starting gun today for the longest election campaign in living memory. There will be 44 days between the calling of the election and polling day. The only comparable gap was in 1945, when the election took place 41 days after being announced.

Mr Major put his party on an election footing at the weekend. After his visit to Buckingham Palace today, ministers will hit the ground running. Apart from a break over Easter to give the voters a rest, there will be six weeks of unrelenting campaigning.

To haul back his poll deficit Mr Major has assembled a big personal campaign team. It emerged yesterday that Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare will assist in the organisation of all his evening events, including the rallies.

Ministers are keen to get the Commons up quickly. After the election announcement the whips will agree on which Bills can be got through quickly.

But Westminster has been in limbo for days. Although the formal dissolution of Parliament may not come until early in April, allowing MPs

access to their parliamentary offices up until then, most MPs want to get out on the campaign trail. Mr Major is about to let them off the leash. As they prepare for the battle ahead ministers and MPs will bear in mind the following milestones.

□ March 17: election called. Mr Major tells the Cabinet, the Queen and then the nation from Downing Street. Big fall in crime figures announced. Sell-off of mobile telephone airwaves announced.

□ March 19: ministers will hail fresh fall in unemployment.

□ March 20: cabinet finalises manifesto.

□ March 25: last Question Time clash between Mr Major and Mr Blair.

□ March 26/27: MPs rise for Easter, probably not to return before the election.

□ April 2-3: parties publish manifestos.

□ April 4: Major holds the first of seven big campaign rallies, at the Royal Albert Hall.

□ April 7: party leaders formally take to the road in their campaigns.

□ April 16: nominations close. □ April 29: Mr Major's final rally in London.

□ May 1: polling day.



The Times will be off the mark the moment the Prime Minister calls the election.

Our comprehensive coverage of the campaign will open tomorrow with an unrivalled eight-page supplement.

Read Matthew Parris on the humiliation of the candidates.

Peter Riddell on why the outcome depends on 80 seats.

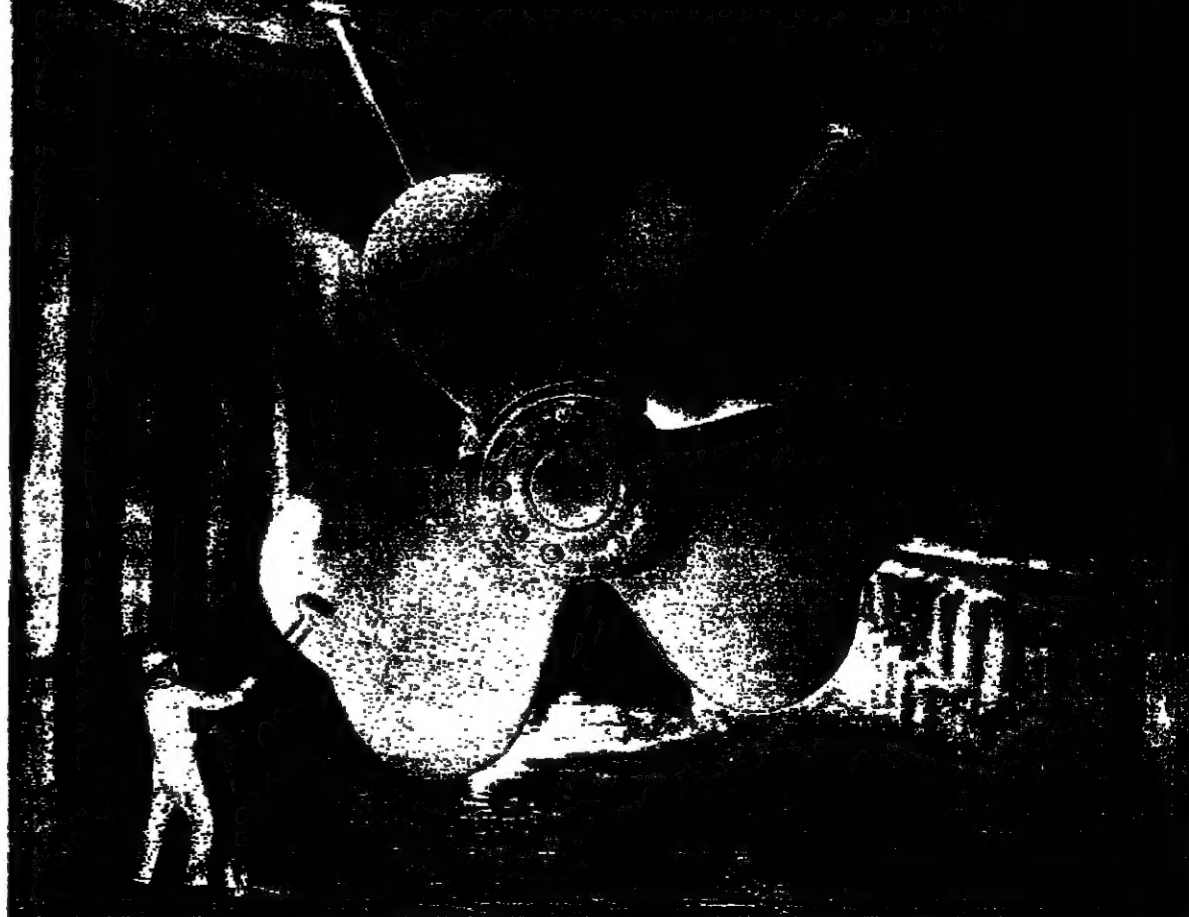
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Television in cells and microwaves make jail plusher than any in England, chief inspector reports

IRA prisoners lead 'a life of luxury' in Ulster



Sir David: he was once an IRA bomb target

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

TERRORIST prisoners transferred from England to serve their sentences in an Ulster jail are living in luxury unprecedented on the mainland, says a report by the Chief Inspector of Prisons, a former Army officer who was once an IRA target.

Maghaberry jail was described by one prison source as "a retirement home for terrorists" with in-cell television, access to microwave ovens, toasters and fridge-freezers. Each inmate can spend up to £99 a week in the prison shop.

They have access to two full-sized grass soccer pitches, two pitches with artificial turf and each wing also has a multi-gym. Among those

transferred to Maghaberry were Patrick Magee, the Brighton bomber, and Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer who were convicted of an IRA plot to bomb English seaside resorts.

In an unannounced visit inspectors also discovered female prisoners in the women's unit ignored prison officers and would only speak to the governor or deputy governor. "Prisoners telephoned the Director of Operations, and he responded to their requests," the report by Sir David Ramsbotham, the chief inspector, says.

Sir David, Colonel Commandant 2nd Battalion Royal Green Jackets from 1987 to 1992, was believed to be the intended target of an IRA bomb found outside his home in Kenning-

ton in November 1989. He served several tours of duty in Northern Ireland and in 1974 he commanded a battalion in the Lower Falls area. From 1978 to 1980 he commanded the 39 Infantry Brigade responsible for the Belfast district.

Although the prison has a policy of integrating loyalist and republican prisoners, two timetables operated in the furniture craft shop because republican women inmates refused to work with other prisoners, inspectors found.

In the women's unit every cell had a television which the inmates rented for 25p a week. "Duets and curtains were common. The standard of the accommodation was the best we have seen anywhere for women's prisons," the report says.

Association rooms were furnished with a television, stereo system, exercise equipment, a pool table and mini library. Families were allowed into the jail which holds an annual summer sportsday and barbecue and a Christmas pantomime.

Each unit within Maghaberry jail also has a food freezer, a microwave oven, toaster and kettles and prisoners were able to purchase unlimited quantities of food from the tuckshop.

The level of luxury for inmates is an embarrassment for Michael Howard who agreed to transfer men and women convicted of serious terrorist offences to jails in Northern Ireland on the basis they enjoyed no more privileges than they would on the mainland. The

Home Secretary's policy is that prison should be "decent but austere" and he is opposed to in-cell television.

Around 20 men and women convicted of terrorist offences on the mainland have been transferred back to Maghaberry. Sir David demanded a reduction in the £99-a-week spending limit to the £250p to £15 range, depending on a prisoner's status, operating at jails in England and Wales.

Sir David supported one demand from Anderson and O'Dwyer, who were transferred from Durham jail, to be treated the same as other women inmates and allowed compassionate leave to visit relatives in Northern Ireland who were seriously ill. They are currently held under

Home Office rules which do not allow them to benefit from more relaxed rules on early release and compassionate leave operating in Northern Ireland.

A spokeswoman of the Northern Ireland Office said there was no upper limit on the amount of personal private cash a prisoner could spend written down in regulations.

She admitted that the system was more generous than that operating in England and Wales but said it was unlikely inmates actually spent that amount.

The spokeswoman said the Northern Ireland prison service welcomed the report and would respond fully to its findings in a number of weeks.

May Balls fall victim to the serious business of having fun

■ Celebrity consultants and corporate sponsors are the new face of Oxbridge May Balls, Damian Whitworth writes.

THE harsh laws of the free-market jungle have invaded the traditional idyll of May Balls, the champagne-fuelled rites of passage for Oxbridge undergraduates. In an increasingly competitive market, colleges are turning to celebrity consultants and corporate sponsors to show that nothing succeeds like excess.

With prices for the smartest tickets breaking the £200 barrier, students are shopping around outside their own colleges for the most lavish ball to attend. Smaller competitors are unable to compete.

At the height of the recession, some balls — most notably at Pembroke, Cambridge — collapsed through lack of support. Now times have changed. When tickets for the Trinity Ball went on sale this year, all 900 went in 25 minutes. Students had been queuing for hours.

Paula Black, president of the Trinity Ball committee, said: "It was the first year we have had queues. It is quite a lot of money to pay, but it goes further because there are more attractions now."

Trinity, which annually rivals St John's as the biggest Cambridge ball, first held such events at the turn of the century. Then the boat club had a dinner and dance under the stars for members of the

college. Now, students expect ever more innovative entertainment all through the night.

Last year Emmanuel had an event for 600 students costing £17 a head. This year 1,400 guests are paying £207 for a double ticket, including dinner and a chart band. Bruce Oldfield, the fashion designer, has been engaged to design the event. Tickets sold out within days.

Toby Chapell, president of the Emmanuel Ball committee, said: "People are expect-



Magdalene poster by Scarie, and sponsorship

ing a lot more. You need a famous band, jazz, comedy, a casino, and rides. So you've got to do a big event for a lot of people to cover that."

Nadya Rajan, another Emmanuel student who co-ordinates the ball's press coverage, added: "There is a much more consumer approach to the larger balls. People from other colleges shop around."

At Magdalene College, Cambridge, the ball has a poster designed by Gerald Scarle, lighting by the company that illuminated the Brit Awards, and support from the merchant bank SBC Warburg. "It's the first time we have had a sponsor of that calibre," said Nick Watkins, its ball president, who has also talked his way into a job with the bank when the ball is over.

"Standards have been getting higher and higher in recent years. It is getting to the stage when you have to have very good ideas just to get noticed, there's a lot more competition." Even without naming the bands that will be playing on the night, most of

the £220 double tickets have been sold.

Colleges unable to compete with the most professional balls are holding more low-key, cheaper and less formal events. Ben Jackson, president of Cambridge University Student Union, said: "It's very competitive. For a lot of colleges, there is a move away from holding balls towards events which cost slightly less. Some of the smaller ones fold or are unsuccessful."

At Oxford, the competition is a little less ferocious. Christ Church recently decided, in a spirit of egalitarianism, to scrap its traditional triennial commemorative ball in favour of a less grand event, leaving New College and Magdalene, the big players in this field.

This year it is the turn of Magdalene — 750 double tickets at £185, or £220 including dinner — have already sold out. Aniela Waitt, of the Magdalene Ball committee, said: "At Cambridge, things are slightly worse because there are more balls held every year. But there are very high expectations for the Magdalene Ball, which is tough for us. We have to cater for so many kinds of music. The days of just one band are gone, and you need a chart band that people have heard of."



Degrees of celebration: a long night stretches out at St John's, Cambridge

Relatives celebrate Oates the polar hero

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

CAPTAIN OATES, who famously gave his life during Scott's ill-fated 1912 expedition to the South Pole, was remembered yesterday at the village church where he worshipped.

Descendants of the man who defined courage for a generation of Englishmen gathered at the 13th-century St Mary's Church in Gessingthorpe, Essex, after a determined effort by the churchwarden Tony Dagnall to trace them. Veterans of Oates's regiment, the Inniskilling Dragoons, joined them and villagers in a service to mark his death 85 years ago today, when he was 32.

Caroline Oates, 15, a great-great-niece, said: "I would love to have met him. I am very proud of him. He has made me realise what people can do and how they can help others. He is an inspiring figure."

Suffering from severe frostbite, Oates told his colleagues on the expedition, "I am just going outside, and may be some time", because he feared that he was slowing them down. Mr Dagnall, who described Oates as a great hero, hopes for a permanent memorial in the form of a foundation that would reward the courage of young people.

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THE TIMES GUIDE TO ELECTION ISSUES

9. Transport

Treasury will be keeping its foot on the brake

TRANSPORT has long been the Cinderella of government. Neglected, starved of funds and low on the list of Cabinet priorities, Britain's roads, railways and urban networks are in a sorry state. Since the Tories came to power in 1979 there have been 11 Transport Secretaries, staying an average of only 18 months. The department is demoralised and confused as the Treasury repeatedly singles it out for a bad deal in the annual spending round. In the last Budget, it was savaged even more than usual, with £870 million lopped off its plans. Indeed, the very existence of the department is in question: the Tories have indicated they may abolish it, and Labour is said to be considering its amalgamation with the environment department.

Yet transport is an issue that arouses strong passions among voters. The motorists' lobby — which can include anyone who owns a car — is strong and angry at the state of Britain's crumbling motorways and bridges, the congestion now estimated to cost business £19 billion a year, and the cuts in road building. Rail enthusiasts are even angrier. Rail privatisation, the most complex and controversial of all the state sell-offs, has been bitterly opposed from its inception by many Conservative as well as Labour supporters. The form, as well as the philosophy, has been questioned, the bureaucratic difficulties protracted and the results yet to win over most rail users.

Transport is also caught in the crossfire between opposing interests. The rise of the environmental movement has in its sights the backbone of Britain's transport system: private cars and lorries. Once seen by Tories as the symbol of individual choice and affluence, the car is now the enemy to green activists. Road building threatens the interests of homeowners and the countryside. Car pollution is a main cause of urban noise, dirt, rising respiratory illness and environmental damage. The rise in car ownership is blamed for the decline in public transport, especially in the countryside, the construction of out-of-town shopping centres which are killing the heart of many towns, and traffic congestion.

The Conservatives have found that traditional friends such as motorists lobbies have become liabilities; the influence they had on the Department of Transport's policies is blamed for the under-

Road traffic has increased sixfold over the past 40 years and is likely to double again in the next 20. And reducing demand by price — whether it be raising taxes on fuel, banning cars from city centres, or introducing charges for motorway use — runs into sharp opposition.

The problem for the Tories is that having downplayed or downgraded public transport for so long, they cannot easily now turn against private motoring as there is little alternative. The failure to invest in rail has been so great, especially in the London Underground, that privatisation was seen as the only way to get money for the urgently needed infrastructure upgrade. But the benefits are yet to flow, and will hardly affect road traffic. The Tories, pressing environmental credentials, are trying to revive

cycling and even walking — but though popular, such gestures are marginal to getting Britain moving again.

Labour, traditionally the champion of public provision, is caught on another dilemma: cost. It opposes rail privatisation but cannot afford to buy back a national system and knows that Treasury constraints will never allow rail to become an attractive alternative to road. The Underground presents a classic problem: privatisation is anathema, but higher taxes have been ruled out and private finance initiatives — now finding favour with Labour — will not be enough to revamp a dilapidated system.

Labour also suffers from lack of political attention to transport. It, too, has run through its spokesmen rapidly. Andrew Smith, who recently succeeded Clare Short, has yet to establish his authority. Glenda Jackson, part of the transport team, is better known but is shrill and reactive. The party that made much of its opposition to rail privatisation lacks consistency in formulating an alternative. It has also failed to make an impression on another issue where Tory ideology has brought disaster: bus deregulation. The impression has been given that the running has been left to road protesters. Save Our Railways and environmentalists. In a recent poll of 1,000 people, 6 per cent recognised the road protester known as Swampy, 3 per cent recognised Sir George Young and not one person could identify Andrew Smith.

Leading article, page 21

Tory years of neglect have taken a heavy toll

EVEN the Conservatives would concede that Britain's transport is poor. Britain has some of Europe's most congested roads, expensive public transport and most dilapidated road and rail infrastructure. Traffic speeds in big cities are hardly faster than in Victorian times. London's promoters see poor transport in the capital as the single factor most damaging to its attempt to win global business.

THE RECORD

than £26 billion on motorways and trunk roads, completing more than 400 schemes to improve national roads and building or upgrading 1,300 miles of trunk road. A further £351 million has been spent on traffic management.

The figures are impressive, but the results are not. The Government has, at long last, now admitted what seemed obvious to many: as soon as roads are built they fill up with traffic. The M25 around London, completed in the mid-1980s, is now Britain's busiest motorway. And the faster road connections become, the more industry will use "just in time" delivery to save warehouse charges. As a result, roads now account for 91 per cent of freight delivery. And with the increase in axle weights to 38 tonnes and, soon, to 40 tonnes, the strain on the road system is growing. There are fewer lorries on the roads than 20 years ago, but they demand more space, do more damage and cause more distress to residents than the smaller vans and trucks.

The bill for repairing crumbling and crowded motorways will rise rapidly. The Government therefore has proposed an electronic toll system, finally accepting the principle of road charging. Trials on the M3 have not begun as the complicated technology essential in a country too crowded to allow toll booths at motorway entrances — needs further laboratory testing. The principle is deeply unpopular and the scheme has been delayed indefinitely.

A more radical change came with the acceptance by the Government of limits on road building. The turning point was the protracted battle over the Twyford Down road to link the motorways around Southampton. Electorally, this decision — popular with the Treasury — was eased by the growing power of the environmental lobby. The Conservatives insist they are not "anti-



Richard Branson's Virgin Group, which is part of the consortium running Eurostar, has become one of the big private train operators, with control of CrossCountry Trains and the franchise for the West Coast main line

car", but in the 1996 Budget they cancelled 110 road schemes, allowing only 114 to go ahead. Nevertheless, even existing road schemes are now arousing furious opposition. The most controversial was the Newbury bypass, and the eviction of protesters from trees and tunnels along the route cost millions of pounds.

Since the 1992 election the Transport Department has been preoccupied with rail privatisation. Dismissed by the late Robert Adley as a "poll tax on wheels" this has proved more controversial, costly and complex than anyone predicted. It has run into the furious opposition not only of Labour and the Left, but of environmentalists, railway supporters, passengers and many Conservatives. Having taken the basic and controversial decision to separate responsibility for track and infrastructure from train operations, the Government proposed the franchising of 25 routes to private companies for fixed terms. All rolling stock was to be turned over to three privatised leasing companies, and Railtrack, responsible for the network and the main stations, was to be privatised.

This system involved a massive new bureaucracy to franchise the services, regulate safety, protect passenger interests and ensure that the new system penalised bad performance and encouraged competition. All links were to be governed by contracts and legal agreements. The Government set minimum service obligations, capped fares to no higher than inflation until beyond 2000, protected through-ticketing and tried to co-ordinate timetabling.

At almost every stage in the setting up of the new machinery, bureaucracy and confusion led to horror stories. Law suits were filed to hinder the franchising operations. There were delays and initial lack of interest by potential operators. The Government was forced into a drastic writing down of the national value of Railtrack in an effort to speed up its flotation, while retreating from the high level of access charges initially proposed.

Shares soared, leading to complaints that the company, sold for £1.9 billion, had been undervalued. Another row followed the sale of Porterbrook and Eversholt, two of the three leasing companies, which yielded huge profits to the management buy-outs.

Privatisation of the Train Operating Units began slowly, and was marred when one of the first three planned transfers — to a management buy-out by the London, Tilbury and Southend railway — had to be cancelled at the last minute because of accusations of charging irregularities.

However, the leasing contracts quickly picked up in 1995, and some of the bigger bus and transport consortiums began winning bids that brought confidence to the market. One of the last to be franchised was the largest, the West Coast main line, which was delayed because of the need for huge investment in upgrading the line and in new tilting rolling stock. It was won — to the Government's relief — by Richard Branson's Virgin Group, adding to the group's control of CrossCountry Trains and its big stake in the consortium franchised to build the high-speed channel link and operate the Eurostar service. Virgin has emerged as one of the big train operators in Britain, with the bus operator National Express.

Privatisation is now virtually complete, with noticeable improvements in service on some lines. However, South West Trains, the first franchise owned by Stagecoach, caused intense annoyance by laying off so many drivers that at first it had to cancel 70 trains a day, to the fury of passengers and at a cost of a large daily fine.

Rail also dominated the transport agenda with the opening of the Channel Tunnel on May 6, 1994. Car shuttles to Calais and through services to Paris and Brussels built up quickly, and within a

year the tunnel was carrying almost half the passengers to France. The Tunnel suffered a disastrous fire last November, which caused severe damage. No one was killed, and most safety systems worked. But public confidence was shaken and tunnel traffic disrupted, and the repairs are scheduled to take up to six months.

Sir George Young has tried to encourage environmentally friendly transport policies, and is a keen supporter of cycling. This received a big boost when the Millennium Fund announced a £40 million grant for a network of cycle paths. Local authorities have also been encouraged to provide cycle lanes in towns.

The Government's record on transport has been one of neglect, believing that other issues were more important. But the media focus on "road rage", the confusion over changes in rail provision and the growing conflict between the demand for better transport and protection of the environment have all increased the attention of the voters — and the Government.

A new government is likely to appoint a Transport Secretary who lasts longer and is more committed to the challenge than the previous 11 incumbents.

Next week: employment

THE POLITICIANS

SIR GEORGE YOUNG

Age: 55
Education: Eton and Oxford.
Family: married, two sons and two daughters.
Experience: MP for Ealing Acton since 1974 and Transport Secretary since July 1995. Long-standing ally of John Major since working with him as Lambeth councillor in early 1970s. Opposition whip, 1976-79. Junior ministerial jobs at Health and Environment; sacked by Margaret Thatcher 1986. Recalled to Whips' Office 1990. Financial Secretary to the Treasury 1994-95. Politics: left-of-centre moderate, strong green inter-



ests. Cyclist. Sent children to comprehensive schools. Performance: has challenged the strength of the roads lobby in his department and boosted the cause of cycling.

ANDREW SMITH

Age: 46
Education: Reading School and Oxford.
Family: married, one stepson.
Experience: MP for Oxford East since 1987 and Shadow Transport Secretary since July 1996. Higher education spokesman 1988-92; Shadow Treasury Minister 1992-94; Shadow Chief Secretary 1994-96. Politics: technocrat with strong academic credentials and commitment to racial equality. A keen cyclist. Performance: quick rise in the party; moved from Treasury job to give realistic financial basis to transport



policy, especially commitment to restore publicly owned and accountable railway. Sober approach has won confidence of transport executives but generated few headlines.

WHAT THEY SAID

This is a momentous day for the railways and I hope that, in years to come, people will look back on today as the turning point — the point at which the renaissance of the railways began.

Sir George Young, Feb 1996, after the first rail franchises began.

The potential of these companies under private-sector management is substantial. At the moment, rail accounts for about 5 per cent of passenger miles, which is amazingly low.

Richard Harnham, transport analyst at UBS. We need to change the culture so it isn't unusual to have a Secretary of State who goes around on a bicycle.

Sir George Young, July 1996

You should never underestimate George's green instincts but there is little enthusiasm for giving them free rein at this stage of the electoral cycle.

DoT official, April 1996

For motorists approaching the capital from the West, you may as well put up a sign saying: "Go home, London closed".

RAC spokesman after closure of Hammersmith Bridge, Jan 1997

I reassert Labour's commitment to a publicly owned, publicly accountable railway.

Andrew Smith, Shadow Transport Secretary. Our pledge is to turn this into the best railway in Europe.

Richard Branson, winner of West Coast franchise, Feb 1997

THE FACTS

Over the past 30 years the weight of goods carried in Britain has averaged just under 2 billion tonnes a year. About 80 per cent goes by road — roughly the same as in 1964 — but the percentage going by rail has halved to 5 per cent. Pipeline and water-borne freight has increased to 13 per cent.

Total road traffic is 40 per cent higher than in 1983. Personal travel has gone up by 46 per cent since 1979. International air travel has more than doubled and sea travel has grown by 74 per cent.

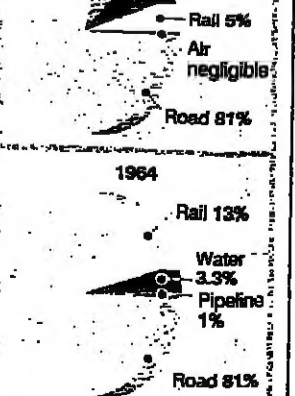
Britain has the fewest road accidents per head in the European Union — almost five times fewer than Portugal. In 1995 there were fewer deaths than in any year since 1926, although there are now 14 times as many vehicles on the roads.

Road congestion now costs £19 billion a year; by 2005 a third of the motorway and trunk road network will suffer chronic congestion.

Since deregulation began more than ten years ago, the number of bus passenger journeys per year outside London has fallen by 29 per

Movement of freight in Britain by volume

Last Department of Transport figures



1994

Rail 13%

Water 2.3%

Pipeline 1%

Road 81%

CONSERVATIVES



Rail privatisation: main plank of manifesto. Party will trumpet results expected to flow soon from better services, falling subsidies and increased investment. Tube privatisation to be pushed forward though form of the self-off still undecided.

Road building: no new road building apart from motorway and trunk road upgrading and bypass schemes already approved. Money focused on improving network, with better traffic flows and measures to ease congestion.

Motorway tolls: possible attempt to pursue scheme, delayed before election, using electronic monitoring. Unlikely to be introduced in next Parliament.

Environment: to have greater emphasis. Cycling to be encouraged in cities. More weight given to regional and local views. Panel of experts to examine links between traffic growth, transport investment and economic growth.

Public transport: shift to better provision, with encouragement of new urban tram networks, bus provision and rail projects such as Thameslink 2000 and Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Little public money available, however, and funds to come from privatisation or private finance initiatives.

LABOUR



Rail privatisation: commitment to take rail back into public sector virtually dropped. Now insisting on Strategic Rail Authority to maximise network benefits and tougher powers of regulator. Train operating leases to continue. Opposed to privatisation of London Underground, but eager to get private money for infrastructure improvements.

Road building: has no commitment to increase road building except small-scale links after exhaustive local consultation.

Motorway tolls: opposed but considering allowing councils the power to impose charges on local roads.

Environment: main plank of Labour transport policy. Big emphasis on cycling, pedestrian provision and environmentally clean transport. Buses to be encouraged and new regulatory framework introduced. More local consultation on environmental priorities and land use.

Public transport: this is a Labour priority, with private investment to be encouraged. But the party is keen to play down its anti-car reputation. More integration of rail and bus services.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS



Rail privatisation: controlling interest to be reacquired in Railtrack, but it is not clear where the money for this would be found; a national rail authority would be set up to implement overall policy in rail sector. Public funds to be used to support local rail network through local authorities.

Road building: opposed to all new road building except repairs to the present network. Car use is to be discouraged, especially for short journeys.

Motorway tolls: unclear.

Environment: strong emphasis on reducing private motoring with higher fuel and vehicle excise taxes and taxation of company-financed motoring. Tougher controls on polluting vehicles. Tax burden to be on vehicle ownership, not usage, and aim is to reduce need for travel. Cycling and walking to be encouraged.

Public transport: main plank of policy. Integrated transport systems to be developed, and ten-year plan on investment priorities, with private finance to be sought to boost rail systems, bus travel and moving freight off the roads.

الجمهورية العربية السورية

'Two rounds winged past him, missing by inches,' corporal claims in his memoirs

SAS soldier 'fired live bullets past Duke's ear'

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

AN SAS soldier fired live ammunition over the heads of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, with two shots missing the Duke's head "by inches", he claimed yesterday.



Duke: he gave soldier "one hell of a look"

Steve Devereux, a corporal in the elite SAS regiment, says in his memoirs that he sent the bullets whistling past the Duke's right ear as he shot at

images of terrorists projected on a screen in front of the royal party. "The rounds winged past the right-hand side of the Duke's head, missing by inches. He didn't bat an eyelid. I knew it was a tight shot, but I made the decision to fire anyway."

He added that, as the Duke — who was wearing ear defenders — left the training room, "he gave me one hell of a vacant look. His right ear must have been buzzing."

Mr Devereux, 37, who left



Steve Devereux on operations with the SAS in Oman. His book, *Terminal Velocity*, describes a hostage-release demonstration before the Queen

the regiment in 1988, said the Queen and the Duke were asked to sit down in a mock-up train carriage. The Queen sat on the right of the aisle, with the Duke on the left in a front-row seat.

In front of them was a large screen on which terrorists and hostages appeared at random, projected via a series of slides. Corporal Devereux's task was to shoot the terrorists in the head on the screen.

"When the fourth slide came

up it half covered the Duke's back and head. He was sitting upright... Lucky for me, I spotted the terrorist just off to the right of the Duke's head. It was close but I fired two rounds and hit the terrorist."

His commanding officer came over to him and said: "Very good shooting... but take it a bit easy, I don't want the Duke slotted [killed], OK?"

Mr Devereux confirmed yesterday that the bullets were live ammunition from his

Heckler & Koch close-quarter anti-terrorist rifle. He said: "I was standing 15 to 20ft behind the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, firing over their heads at the screen. For the first three slides, the terrorists came up away from them, but the fourth one was slightly obscured by the Duke. The rifle is incredibly accurate."

He added: "It may sound extraordinary to fire live bullets over the head of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh, but

that was the sort of thing I was trained for. The regiment really is the best in the world."

His book was seen in advance by the MoD after discussions with the publishers, Smyth Gryphon, but it has taken no steps to prevent publication in a week's time, even though army chiefs are furious about the number of former special forces' soldiers bringing out books.

An MoD official said Mr Devereux would be banned

from any special forces' premises or official functions, to prevent him from picking up new information for any future book. Mr Devereux said yesterday that he was planning a second book.

Mr Devereux, now working for security consultants, dismissed the MoD's concerns. "The MoD likes to be a nanny, but I wouldn't write anything that would be against the interests of my old mates in the regiment," he said.

Worm bait banned in effort to protect salmon

By A STAFF REPORTER

ANGLERS have been banned from using worms as bait for salmon on one of Scotland's most famous rivers. The rule, along a 50-mile stretch of the Tweed, is aimed at conserving fish stocks.

Scientists have recommended the fly-only rule to reduce rod catches — currently around 10,000 salmon a year — particularly during low summer water levels, when the fish often prefer to go for a worm. The move will delight purists, who regard any lure other than a fly as unthinkable.

The ban affects beats run by landowners including the Duke of Roxburghe, the Duke of Sutherland, Earl Haig and the Earl of Portarlington. The best beats — fishing rights to a section of river — can command up to £800 per week. Under the code of conduct introduced by the Tweed Commissioners, salmon beat owners and ghillies have been forbidden from using worms from the junction of the Tweed with the Etrick to its mouth at Berwick. Prawns were banned as bait three years ago for the same reason.

Joyce Nicol, clerk to the commissioners, said: "There was previously a gentlemen's agreement that worms could be used as a last resort — perhaps if someone had not caught a fish throughout an expensive day and particularly wanted to go home with one. It placed some boatmen in a difficult situation if a client insisted on using a worm. We were concerned that they were being used too widely. Now we have a firm rule and boatmen will be able to refuse without offending."

The Association of Scottish District Salmon Fishery Boards backed the move. A spokesman said: "Worms have always been used for trout fishing by small boys, but most active and proper fishermen would denigrate their use for salmon."

Organ row threatens royal patronage of Balmoral church

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE departure of an organist from Crathie Kirk, where the Queen worships while at Balmoral, has dismayed parishioners who fear that it will cause the Royal Family to end a century of worshipping among them.

The Kirk Session, the elders who manage the affairs of Anglican churches in Scotland, asked Charles Taylor to resign after 15 years in charge of music at the little hilltop chapel, less than a mile from Balmoral Castle in Aberdeenshire. The Princess Royal's wed-

ding to Captain Timothy Laurence was held there.

At the heart of the dispute is a 19th-century wind organ donated by Queen Victoria, which needs a £150,000 restoration. Some parishioners fear that the new royal chaplain, Robert Sloan, who is regarded as a modernist, would prefer a new instrument, from America, instead of spending so much improving the old one.

According to one of the wilder rumours, the Queen has asked Balmoral staff to look at refurbishing a rarely used chapel on the estate grounds as an alternative to

Crathie. There are dark tales that this is not the first clash between the Royal Family and Mr Sloan, who was appointed domestic chaplain to the Queen last October.

Mr Sloan yesterday described the allegations against him as "very serious" and "100 per cent wrong".

Mr Taylor, who lives in the village of Torphins, issued a statement through his solicitors. It read: "Mr Taylor has been organist and choirmaster at Crathie since 1982. He has given consistent, loyal service to the church. Recently he has become unhappy about the manner in which the future of the

organ has been handled. "The organ was a gift to the church from Queen Victoria and was by the great organ-builder Father Willis. Mr Taylor has expressed his dissatisfaction to the Kirk Session. They have asked him to resign despite his long service. They have given no reason."

A new organist played at yesterday's service, which was attended by 70 worshippers, one of whom had heard that the Queen was considering reopening an old chapel at Balmoral now doing duty as a furniture store. It could be dusted down and used, he said. "It would

need refurbishment, but it would not take more than a couple of weeks."

Mr Sloan was not at all worried. "The Kirk Session appoints organists and dismisses them. I know nothing about the reasons behind the decision. As far as I know, nothing has been decided over what is to be done about the organ. That decision is months away," he said.

Mr Sloan, from Perth, replaced Keith Angus, regarded as a traditionalist, when he retired.

Buckingham Palace dismissed any suggestion of a rift with the church. "I am not going to get

dragged into tittle-tattle and speculation," said a spokeswoman.

The foundation stone for Crathie Kirk was laid by Queen Victoria in 1893 and it was dedicated in her presence two years later. Her descendants have a private transept built of granite and wood from the old Caledonian Forest in Balmoral. The Prince of Wales attended church in Sandringham yesterday with friends from the worlds of the church and the theatre, including the actors Barry Humphries and Jane Lapotnik and Lady Harrod, president of the Norfolk Churches Trust, of which the Prince is patron.



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PAUL MITCHELL
L U X U R Y H A I R C A R E

Minister warns Howard over ID card Bill

By Philip Webster
Political Editor

MICHAEL HOWARD has been warned that his plans to bring in voluntary identity cards, expected to be one of the central proposals of the Conservative election manifesto, will face serious trouble in the House of Lords.

Vicecount Cranborne, the leader of the Lords, who is to be based at Downing Street during the general election campaign as part of John Major's team, has told the Home Secretary that his draft Bill on ID cards might be seen as no more than a "skeleton measure", with the main powers to be granted later on by regulations rather than primary legislation.

A leaked letter from Lord Cranborne to Mr Howard, seen by *The Times*, says that he and the Conservative Chief Whip in the Lords, Lord Strathclyde, "thought it best to warn you at this early stage that we envisage that there will be trouble if a Bill such as this were to come before the House of Lords". Mr Major promised in the Queen's Speech that Mr Howard would be publishing a draft Bill during this Parliament. It was not intended to become law at this time, but was meant to show the Government's determination to legislate if it won the election. The imminence of the election now makes it unlikely that Mr Howard will be able to publish his Bill.

Lord Cranborne's letter suggests that the main objection would be that Mr Howard's proposal was for an "enabling measure" with significant matters such as tests of residence and the fees left for later regulation.

Watchdog proposes new law on corruption

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

TOUGHER laws to crack down on bribery and corruption in public life will be proposed by the Law Commission this week in part of a two-pronged attack on "sleaze".

The commission, chaired by Dame Mary Arden, a High Court judge, is expected to propose a new single offence of corruption, which would make it easier to prosecute public officials. It will also invite views on whether the police should have greater investigative powers, similar to those of the Serious Fraud Office, to tackle alleged offences of corruption.

In a second offensive, the Home Office is preparing a paper, expected to be published shortly, which will propose a clarification of the common and statute laws on bribery of MPs. One likely option is to extend the scope of the present law so that it includes MPs. The offer or receipt of a gift which was corrupt — for example, because it was intended to influence — would then be a criminal offence.

But the recommendation would be controversial because it would extend the

jurisdiction of the courts over MPs. The attack on sleaze and corruption in public life comes in response to recommendations of Lord Nolan, who chaired the committee on standards in public life established in 1994.

The Law Commission is to publish a consultation paper on Tuesday aimed at making clear which public servants are covered by the corruption laws, and strengthening the laws themselves. The commission, which reports to the Government, was set up in 1965 to study law reform.

The proposals are likely to command support. Lord Nolan said yesterday: "I welcome the valuable work that has been undertaken by the Law Commission with a view to producing a much-needed clarification of the law in this important area."

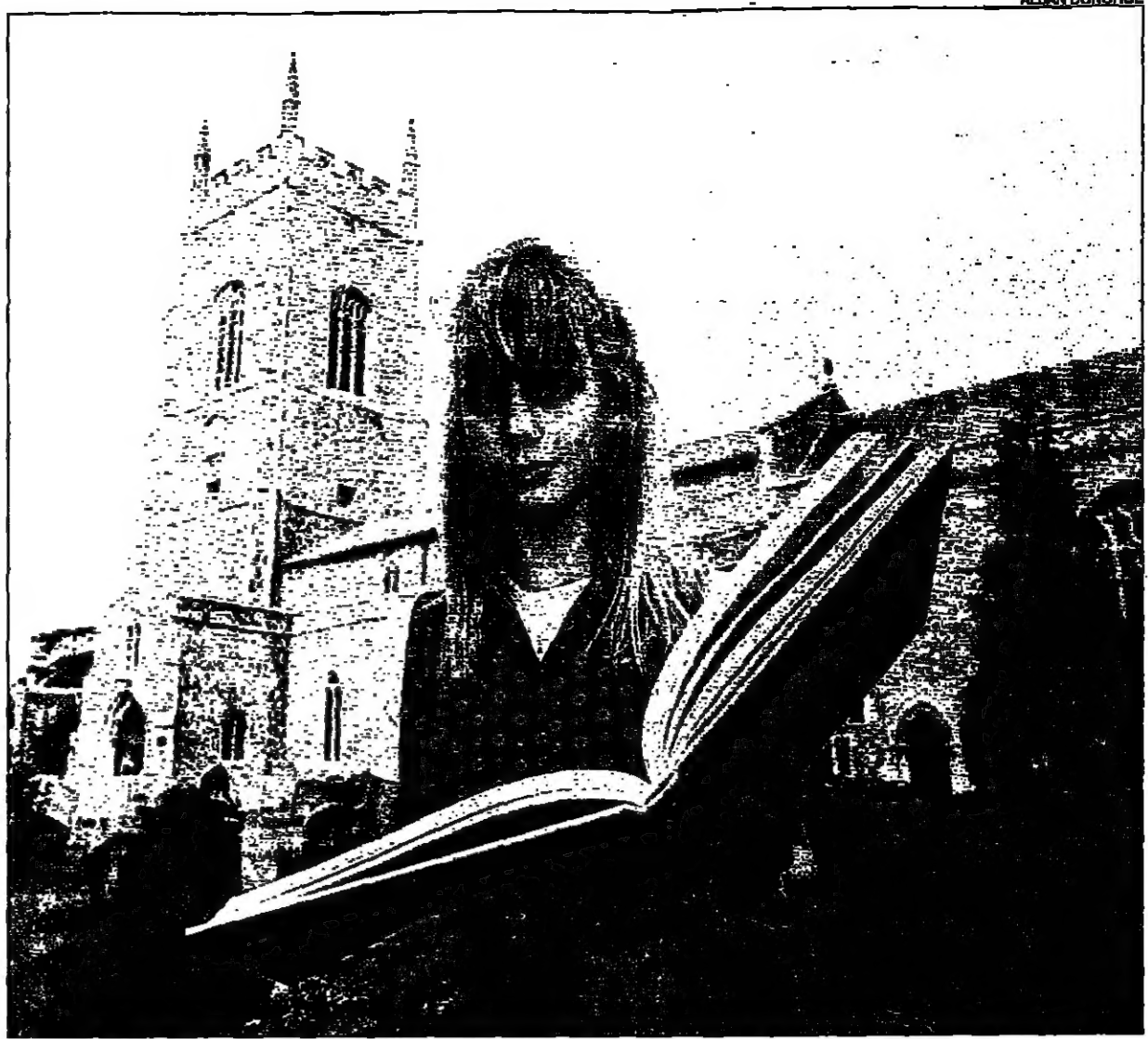
Where bribery or corruption goes on, the perpetrators often escape prosecution because the laws on bribery and corruption are muddled and scattered in at least 11 statutes going back to 1551.

The extent of bribery and corruption is unknown. It is to some extent a "hidden" crime, in that the victims are not immediately apparent. A second problem is that it is not clear who is covered by the laws, a problem made worse with the growth of governmental bodies such as Next Steps agencies. The status of officials within those agencies needs to be defined.

The current law, according to the commission, draws a distinction between public bodies and other bodies, which presents difficulties in the context of privatised industries, in which officials can more easily escape prosecution than those in the private sector.



Lord Nolan, who led the committee set up in 1994



In a class of her own: Leanne Mawditt outside St George's Church. She said: "I miss my friends"

I'm lonely, says Sunday school girl after 'happy clappy' exodus

By A Staff Reporter

A GIRL aged ten is the only child left at a traditional Sunday school after the others left for a charismatic alternative. Leanne Mawditt said: "I didn't want to go because they do a lot of dancing and falling over and that scared me."

Now the solitary pupil has appealed for others to join her because she is bored and lonely reading books about Jesus without even a teacher to guide her, following a split in the congregation at her village church. A dozen other children once attended the religious teaching on Sunday mornings at St George's in Saham Toney, Norfolk.

Villagers who prefer evangelical worship left the 14th-century church six months ago to attend charismatic "happy clappy" services at the nearby Ashill

community centre. The exodus included the two Sunday School organisers and all parents with children at the church, apart from Leanne's family.

She has written an article headlined *The Last Sunday School* in her village magazine, *The Saham Saga*, saying: "I want to stay at St George's because I prefer it, but I miss my friends. I wish some would come back or maybe other children who don't go to church at the moment could come along. It is getting to the stage where if I cannot get anyone else, I will not come any more."

She sits in a first-floor room during morning services and has company only when her 14-year-old sister, Sarah Jane, is on holiday from boarding school. Her stepfather, Donald, is church warden. Her mother, Brenda, 42, said: "Writing in the magazine was her idea. I hope other

children decide to keep her company."

The rector, the Rev Martin Down, 56, ministers to both congregations with the help of a non-stipendiary priest and lay preachers. He said: "I know Leanne is on her own, but she is welcome at the Sunday school at the community centre. It is bigger and more fun. I don't really think she would be frightened if she came and saw for herself."

Mr Down introduced charismatic services at St George's and the neighbouring St Nicholas's in Ashill after moving to the parishes eight years ago. Last year he upset traditional worshippers with plans to remove Victorian oak pews from one side of St Nicholas's to allow worshippers more space to dance. The opposition led to his dropping the idea and holding charismatic services at the community centre instead.

Boy falls to death from cliff

A boy aged ten fell to his death from a 140ft cliff at Seaford, East Sussex. His sister, 12, who was helping him to walk the family dog, was treated in hospital for shock.

Gemma Underdown was talking to friends who went with them and did not notice James at the edge of Seaford Head. He apparently lost his footing as he peered over.

Lonely end

A woman's body lay undiscovered in her Manchester flat for seven months after she apparently killed herself by putting a plastic bag over her head. Lorna Goldworthy, 60, left a note saying: "I have no one to love — no one cares about me."

Youth drink line

A helpline has been launched for children who need help about their drinking, or that of their parents or friends. Drinkline Youth offers counsellors on 0345 320202 (Mon-Fri, 11am-11pm) and recorded information on 0990 143275.

Chance to shine

Britain will be represented in the Eurovision Song Contest by Katrina and the Waves, singing *Love Shine a Light*. The group polled 69,834 public votes on BBC1's National Lottery Live programme. The contest is in Dublin on May 3.

Rider killed

A woman found with fatal head injuries in a field is believed to have been trampled by her horse. Helen Barlow, 35, died shortly after being discovered by a farmer's wife in the field near Nantwich, Cheshire.

Catch of the day

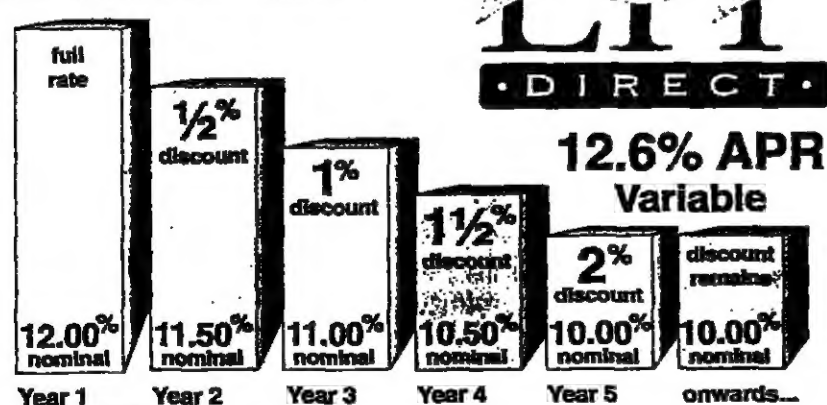
A bride left her reception to attend a Birds Eye job interview, dressed in her white gown. Jennifer Minns, 25, of Hull, had been unable to change the interview date. She is waiting to hear if she has the part-time factory job.

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مكتبة من الأصول

Happy ending as a ghost writer returns in spirit

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

SCHOLARS are preparing to assemble at the Reading Room of the British Library to provide a happy ending to the story of an 1890s poet who made a pact with the Devil to return "a hundred years hence".

They are planning displays about the life and work of Enrich Soames and lectures on his modern influences, which are especially impressive as he never existed. He was the poignant hero of a short story about a man dismissed as third-rate by his contemporaries but who would be recognised by future generations.

Under the terms of his pact with the Devil, he was allowed five hours in the Reading Room on June 3, 1997, to look himself up in encyclopaedias and dictionaries where he expected he would discover his place in posterity.

In the short story *Enrich Soames*, by Max Beerbohm, published in his 1916 master-

piece *Seven Aften* — Soames returns to discover that posterity has ignored him, except as an invention by Beerbohm. As the Devil whisks him away, he realises that the final insult is that no one will ever believe he was real.

Now fans of the story plan to honour Soames. The antiquarian bookseller Edward Maggs, who is co-ordinating the event, said: "We are giving Soames something to feel good about." If all goes to plan, Soames will feel as important as he always hoped to be.

Tentative plans for June 3 include a series of spoof lectures. Sir Stephen Tatum, the former Chief Inspector of Prisons and a Beerbohm fan, will chair discussions on topics as diverse as "The Influence of Soames's Writing in Maoist China" and "Soames and the New Woman, a Post-Feminist Analysis". A proposed display of Soamesiana may feature books which Soames never wrote and portraits which a

leading artist of his day never painted.

When Soames made his pact, he expected to see "pages and pages in the catalogue: 'Soames, Enrich' endlessly — endless editions, commentaries". Explaining to Beerbohm why he had to visit the next century, he said: "Posterity! What use is it to me? A dead man doesn't know that people are visiting his grave — visiting his birthplace — putting up tablets to him — unveiling statues of him."

By bringing real-life characters into the story, Beerbohm (1872-1956) made Soames all the more believable. A leading bibliographer and book collector, Mark Samuels Lasner, who regards this tale as one of the greatest short stories in British literature, managed to dupe the literary world with a fake copy of Soames's non-existent book, *Fungoids*. In 1989, several academic American libraries tried to buy it from a bookseller.

The British Library emphasised that negotiations were at an early stage. It has been receiving calls from Soames fans wondering about any special celebrations. For practical reasons, the event is unlikely to involve the general public.

Soames, whose tragic story speaks to mere mortals everywhere, would have been humbled by the attention. As the Devil takes him away, he tells Beerbohm: "Try to make them know that I did exist."



Fact and fiction: Lasner and a 1912 Soames sketch



Leading article, page 21

Kew plans 'people's palace' of historic treasures

By VALERIE ELLIOTT
WHITEHALL EDITOR

A COLLECTION of treasures from 900 years of history may be transformed into a popular cultural landmark if a bid for lottery funding is successful next month.

The Domesday Book, Shakespeare's will and the log of Captain Bligh's *Bounty* are among the documents held by the Public Record Office, where proposals to create a new museum at its site in Kew, southwest London, are being considered by the Cabinet Office.

"In the 19th century the Public Record Office was the stronghold of the Empire, but this place should be the palace of the people. What we have here is 900 years of people's history," Sarah Tyacke, the Keeper, said.

At present it attracts about 150,000 visitors a year, mostly historians, academics and genealogists, but many people do not know where the office is, or what is held there. Last year, when the Ministry of Defence released the personal records of First World War servicemen, streams of visitors turned up to locate and copy the papers of their relatives. Mrs Tyacke said: "I think all of us here have been struck by the strength of feeling about the soldiers' documents. We also realised we were reaching out to new people."

"There are also areas that most people don't even know we have — for example, half a million wallpaper and fabric designs from the 19th-century



An illuminated page from a 15th-century manuscript held in the archives at Kew

Trade Design Register," she added.

A programme for schools is being drawn up to enable pupils to study periods linked to the national curriculum. The office also wants to put

more records on the Internet. About 8,000 people a month are already contacting the office's Web site and staff believe there is scope for considerable expansion. Jasper Jacobs, a leading

museum design consultant, said: "What they really have to do is make the office public. It may be called public at present, but I think most people would think it more a private or secret office."

Medical museum mixes pain and pleasure

By PAUL WILKINSON

BRITAIN'S first medical museum, illustrating the science's primitive beginnings and great advances, opens next week. The Thackray Museum, in a former workhouse in the grounds of St James's Hospital in Leeds, was set up at a cost of £5 million, including a £3 million grant from the National Lottery fund. The listed building contains Europe's largest display on medicine and health.

Mike Cooper, the museum's chief executive, said that there appeared to be an unprecedented public preoccupation with medical matters. Television dramas and documentaries on the subject attracted big audiences. "We hope we have reflected some of this popular approach and made the subject interesting and fun."

As well as 25,000 medical objects, the museum houses a huge collection of literature. Displays include interactive computers and the history is sometimes depicted in gruesome detail. There is the chance to "walk round" the human body, and a reconstruction of a typical street of 1840s Britain, illustrating the unsanitary living conditions. There are details of crude remedies used in the past.

A section entitled "Pain, Pus and Blood" shows how the discoveries of anaesthetics, antiseptics, and of how to control blood loss led to today's sophisticated surgery. There is a reconstructed Victorian operating theatre, with a model of a child having an amputation without anaesthetic. In a section on childbirth, men can experience the difficulty of carrying a baby in late pregnancy by trying on an "empathy belly".

The museum is based on the private collection of Paul Thackray, whose great-grandfather, Charles, founded a firm supplying medical equipment and instruments. When the business was sold in 1990, he set up a charitable trust which donated £1.8 million to the setting-up costs. The museum will be opened next Monday by Robert Anderson, of the British Museum.



Comet may have caused ancient city's cataclysmic end

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

A CITY famed throughout the ancient world may have been destroyed by a meteorite or comet. According to legend, Ubar, in Oman, was wiped off the face of the Earth by fire from the sky as God's punishment for its evil ways, in a fate similar to that of Sodom and Gomorrah.

An American astronomer has concluded that there may be truth in the

story. Gerrit Verschuur, a radio-astronomer from the University of Memphis, points to the existence near the site of Ubar of impact craters caused by meteorites or comets.

The city, which lay in the Empty Quarter of the Arabian desert, had grown rich by trading in frankincense, which was as precious as gold. Described by Lawrence of Arabia as the Atlantis of the sands, its ruins were discovered in 1992 by an expedition led by Sir Ranulph

Fiennes. The craters were first described more than 50 years ago by St John Philby, the Arabist scholar and father of the spy Kim Philby. In his book *The Empty Quarter*, published in 1933, Philby described craters at Wabar, some of the most impressive in the world.

Their existence seems to have been neglected by astronomers, perhaps because they are in one of the most inhospitable places in the world. Michael Saba, an American hospital

administrator and Middle Eastern enthusiast, has led several expeditions to them. "The largest is about 150 metres across, the second is 80-90 metres and [the third] 12-13 metres," he said. "They must have been formed by an object that broke up as it came through the atmosphere."

In 1995 Dr Saba took one of the world's experts on impact craters, Eugene Shoemaker, to see the craters, some 200 miles from Ubar. Dr Shoemaker was the co-discoverer

of the comet Shoemaker-Levy, which collided with Jupiter in 1994. He dated them to about AD 500, about the time that Ubar was destroyed.

Dr Verschuur says: "The evidence that Ubar was wiped out in a cataclysm is very strong. The city walls were blown down and everybody was killed. Putting one and one together suggests to me that the inhabitants of Ubar were victims of the impact that created the Wabar craters."

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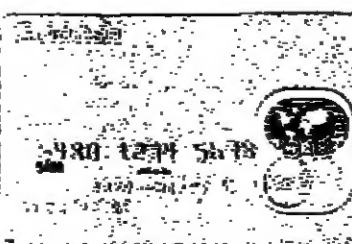


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French banks kept millions belonging to Holocaust Jews

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH banks held on to billions of pounds in assets belonging to Jews murdered in the Holocaust, according to new evidence suggesting that French bankers profited from the Nazi pillage in the same way as Swiss counterparts. French accounts belonging to Jews were blocked on Nazi Germany's orders in 1941, but many years later showed at thousands remained unclaimed, their owners having perished in Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War. Today the accounts are worth at least £1 billion (£125 million).

Under French law, all accounts inactive for 30 years must be turned over to the government, but according to *Le Monde* there is no evidence of huge transfers to the state in the 1970s when the 30-year period expired. Instead, French banks allegedly took action, allowing the assets to "vanish".

These accounts disappeared without trace, absorbed amid general indifference by the huge bureaucratic machine of the public and private banking network, *Le Monde* said. The report has prompted a fresh wave of outrage in France after the scandal over unclaimed money taken from Jews that was in French museums and new evidence that Vichy regime officials seized valuables and property from French Jews deported to the death camps.

Jewish groups claim that Swiss banks hold up to £4 billion in murdered Jews' assets — the banks put the figure nearer £17 million — but the *Le Monde* allegations are the first to accuse French bankers of similar actions.

More than 76,000 Jews were deported from France. After the war, many frozen accounts were reactivated, either by Holocaust survivors or the families of the victims. However, the 1951 study recorded at least 3,000 accounts still unclaimed at that date.

Le Monde says only one such account has been made over to the French treasury since the 1966 law required banks to surrender inactive accounts. The Bank of France and *Crédit Lyonnais*, for example, held more than 1,000 unclaimed accounts between them. No trace of those has been found.

Neo-Nazis face 'cemetery' court

Marseille: Four French neo-Nazis go on trial today for a 1990 anti-Semitic graveyard outrage which caused nationwide revulsion and prompted a huge protest march in Paris, led by François Mitterrand, who was then President. They are accused of unearthing and desecrating the recently buried body of Felix Germon in a Jewish cemetery. (Reuters)

The French Banks' Association responded to the report by declaring flatly that "French banks respected the law", but it added that individual banks would carry out research into unclaimed accounts. *Crédit Lyonnais* has already launched such an investigation. However, many banking records have been lost or destroyed in the past 50 years.

Coming two weeks before a government commission begins an investigation into the fate of property confiscated from French Jews, the allegations have led to a fresh bout of soul-searching as France struggles to come to terms with its wartime past.

□ Zurich: One of Switzerland's biggest banks said yesterday that it had offered to compensate a Czech family of Holocaust survivors whose Swiss bank account was closed in 1941 without their approval. It would not disclose the amount offered.

Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) said its review of the case, unearthed by a Swiss newspaper, found it was impossible to determine what happened to the money, but it would offer compensation as a gesture of goodwill.

Gertrud Eismann, for UBS, said the bank was prepared to do the same thing in other cases if former wartime account holders could make a solid case that wealth they deposited for safekeeping from Hitler had vanished without a trace. (Reuters)



King Hussein comforts the father of Sivan Fathi, 13, who was shot last week

King's sympathy visit to parents moves Israelis

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

IN A gesture unprecedented in the bloody history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, King Hussein of Jordan yesterday braved the fury of Islamic extremists and visited the homes of the Jewish families who lost teenage daughters in last week's massacre by a Jordanian soldier.

His harrowing progress through grief-stricken homes in the nondescript working class town of Beit Shemesh was condemned by a Palestinian spokesman as "an exaggeration" and "superfluous" and by an Israeli right-wing group, the Women in Green, as "cynically using the suffering of the parents".

It came as the ailing Middle East peace process was plunged into a new crisis when Palestinian representatives refused to attend talks on the final status issues, including Jerusalem, that had been due to open today.

Israel's Army was placed on red alert in anticipation of Palestinian mass unrest if building work starts this week as planned on the new settlement of Har Homa in occupied east Jerusalem, which was captured from Jordan in 1967.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, accompanied the king as interpreter. Three thousand Israeli soldiers and police officers were on duty in a protection operation codenamed "Operation Warm Feeling".

In moving scenes which amazed many Israelis, the king, in a suit and traditional red-checked keffiyeh head-dress, grasped the hands of families sitting in tears on

blankets on the floor during the Jewish seven-day mourning period. Some spoke in Arabic to the king, who brought along two of his children, Prince Faisal and Princess Aisha.

Grief-stricken relations offered the Hashemite monarch the biblical welcoming platter of bread and salt and most praised his gesture. Their children, seven girls aged 12 and 13, were mown down by a hail of bullets on a piece of border territory known as the Hill of Peace.

"The memory of your daughter will live with me forever. I hope her memory will give you strength," the king told the grieving parents of Sivan Fathi, 13. His voice close to breaking, the king added: "Your loss is my loss."

As rain poured relentlessly on the Jordanian leader, most ordinary Israelis applauded what one Jerusalem office worker described as "the courage and sincerity" of his visit, which had been hastily coordinated between the Israeli and Jordanian security services. The office worker added as she watched Israeli television's coverage of the tour: "If only all the Arab leaders were like Hussein, we would have real peace."

Last night, Tzachi Hanegbi, the Israeli Justice Minister, threatened that Israel would expel Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, from Gaza to the Palestinian diaspora if mass violence occurred in Palestinian areas when work on the Har Homa settlement started. The minister also hinted that Mossad agents could assassinate him.

India makes peaceful overtures to Pakistan in bid to end 50-year conflict

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA will make exceptional overtures to Pakistan this month to normalise relations after 50 years of hostility in which there have been three wars and growing dangers of nuclear conflict. It will seek to open cross-border trade and ease visa restrictions, and will offer to begin talks on a lasting solution to the Kashmir conflict. It will also propose negoti-

ations to end a stalemate in the war on the Siachen Glacier in the Himalayas, the world's highest battleground.

With an apparently more conciliatory government in office in Pakistan and an Indian determination to improve relations, the prospects for defusing one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints have never been better. The rhetoric of war has abruptly given way to a new language of conciliation in Islamabad and

Delhi, with both sides expressing hope that the two countries — home to 20 per cent of the world's population — can agree on a series of measures.

They are to restart the tradition of regular talks between their foreign secretaries. Agreement on the first round, between March 28 and 31 in Delhi, is a result of the change of government in Pakistan last month, which brought Nawaz Sharif to power. He has frequently asserted the need to end conflict

with India. Delhi will propose the establishment of joint working groups to discuss Kashmir and other sensitive issues. It is apparently prepared to give up its territorial claims over Pakistani Kashmir, and to agree to the 1947 ceasefire line — the line dividing Indian and Pakistani Kashmir — becoming a permanent international border. Islamabad would likewise have to give up its claim to Indian Kashmir.

Delhi is ready to demilitarise the

Siachen Glacier, where troops fight at 20,000ft for control of an uninhabitable and strategically unimportant no man's land, so long as Pakistan agrees a simultaneous withdrawal. The 13-year conflict is probably the world's most pointless war.

I.K. Gujral, the Indian External Affairs Minister, told *The Times*: "It is an ambition of my life that we and Pakistan should sort things out. If concessions are called for on both sides, then both of us should

be willing to adjust and accommodate." Mr Gujral, 76, has made it a personal mission to normalise relations. He was born in Jhelum and married in Lahore, in what is now Pakistan. "We have emotional feelings for the people of that country. I look at this problem in a very human sense. We should behave decently to each other."

He added that despite war and animosity at a political level, the people of Pakistan and India were not estranged. India had a vested

interest in a peaceful, unified, integrated and developing Pakistan, he said.

□ Islamabad: Gohar Ayub, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, said a peaceful solution to the Kashmir dispute could allow real friendship to develop with India. "Let's get to the core and then live as good friends," he told reporters. India and Pakistan had "both realised the importance of bilateral discussions if they are to witness a stable future". (Reuters)

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Talkland

Exile for the fortunate and despair for those left behind follow Albania's descent into chaos

Child vandals join the destruction at King Zog's palace

FROM TOM WALKER IN DURRES

LITTLE was left in the palace of the former King Zog yesterday as the orgy of looting that has despoiled the Albanian port of Durrës ground to a close.

Left to their own devices, a gang of children systematically smashed the fittings and masonry of one of Albania's finest buildings, shrieking with delight as they sent tons of marble crashing down its elaborate central stairwell.

The Italianate palace, built in the 1930s on an old Roman site, commands a fine view. Neither the king nor his usurper Enver Hoxha would have been amused.

While the *Lord of the Flies* mayhem continued inside, a crowd of 4,000 would-be boat people thronged the harbour front, pushing a rusting iron launch towards the water.

Further south along the beach, 150 Turks queued for dinghies taking them to a waiting frigate. American marines hovered over the churning surf in Cobra helicopters.

Zog, Hoxha, Sali Berisha, the beleaguered President: each is responsible for today's anarchy. A tribal society isolated from the world for half a century and then suddenly catapulted towards capitalism: something had to give, and the scenes in Durrës yesterday were the consequence.

Police and vigilantes in garish fleece balaclavas had returned a sort of order, and the frenzied shooting and anarchy that prevailed last week was over. But in its place has come a tide of despair: while children and government-thrashed thugs rule the roost, ordinary people and the few foreigners prepared to invest in Albania want to get out — quickly.

"I'm not happy thinking about jumping into a boat or swimming for it, but this is what the Government has done to me," said a six-month-pregnant Edeva Lalaj as she joined the waterfront crowd. "The country's heading for civil war," said her husband Steven. Occasionally, automatic fire provoked a massed rush for cover.

Italy defended yesterday its evacuation on Friday of British refugees from the Albanian port of Durrës, denying that Italian special forces had deliberately left the Britons to endure a night of terror at the mercy of armed Albanians before coming back to rescue them nearly seven hours later.

Officials said the rescue had been temporarily suspended because of shooting and fog, and had resumed at daylight. "An evacuation is not a picnic," an Italian Foreign Ministry official said. "We carried out the operation to the very best of our ability in extremely difficult circumstances."

The British Embassy in Rome praised the Italian rescue effort. "We asked them to get the British out safe and well, and that is what they did," said Keith Broomfield, the British Minister in Rome.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, said it had clearly been a difficult operation, with "large numbers of people milling around on the beach, including many Albanians, some of whom were violent, some of whom were themselves trying to flee". There were only 20 Italian troops at the quay.

Sixty four British evacuees emerged angry and exhausted from the *San Giusto*. They said they had driven in convoy from the British Embassy in Tirana to Durrës, where their cars, including the British Ambassador's Discovery, had been stolen.

"Berisha should be hanged. I'll do it with my own hands," said Kulltim Alushi, a 22-year-old clothing retailer. Many said they had tried to jump on boats in the past, most notably in the 1991 exodus, when 40,000 made the perilous trip to Italy. Many had already been abroad illegally, only to be deported.

Among the prosperous beachfront villas in the government compound, those who had invested in Albania's flawed experiment in market democracy were trying to pick up the pieces. Simona Braci, the district manager of Incat, a British construction and trading firm, pointed out bullet holes in the ceiling, the result of her husband Luli's attempts to keep out looters last week.

Later the raiders stuck guns in his stomach and stole the company lorry. But in comparison to many in the compound they were lucky. Most savagely wrecked was President Berisha's own seafaring residence: all that remained in the grass outside were a pair of pink slippers, a German magazine and a broken lavatory seat.

The compound gate is now guarded by a Kalashnikov-carrying youth in a purple ski mask with tassels. Albania's tradition of blood feuds is still very much alive and terrorist disguises are now *de rigueur* among the new forces of authority. "If they have to shoot anyone, they may have trouble in the future with the victim's families. It's best not to be seen," explained Mrs Braci. "We are quite an ancient society."

As evening drew in, two women emerged from King Zog's palace with the last remaining furniture — half a door, ten feet of ornately fluted hardwood.

"It'll burn nicely," said Humida, a nearby resident. "These people were all scum."

Leading article, Letters, page 21 Photograph, page 24



Albanians watch a US Marine helicopter take off yesterday near the port of Durrës as America continued to evacuate foreign citizens

War gives Coke taste of the real thing

THE Coca-Cola war at the edge of Tirana is being fought with assault rifles and hand grenades rather than advertising campaigns.

While American expatriates have all but fled the anarchic Albanian capital, airlifted out in a fleet of Marine helicopters, the factory's smooth Italian director is holding out in a series of gunfights along the perimeter fence.

"Why should I leave?" Francesco De Candia, the director, asks coolly inside his office. "It's not war at the moment, just a problem with people who don't know the meaning of democracy or law."

His efforts to protect the



Anthony Loyd reports from Tirana on the determination of an Italian executive and his helpers to defend their factory

factory rely so far on the loyalty of the Albanian family which owns the site. The heavily-armed Lorica cousins have organised themselves into a series of patrols and defensive positions, determined to protect the three-year-old factory — which produces 80 million bottles of Coke a year — and its 40 vehicles from looters.

So far they have had four firefights in 48 hours, holding their ground against the equally well-armed gangs outside. Every few hours a police armoured personnel carrier cruises in to support them.

"We trust the police," Signor De Candia says. "They are brave boys and they will protect Coca-Cola as it is a symbol in Albania — a symbol of freedom."

Yesterday President Berisha vowed to retain his position in the face of insurgent demands to resign. Speaking to the Dutch Ambassador in Tirana, Mr Berisha said he would remain President of Albania at least until the results of planned elections in June, according to Hans van Mierlo, the Dutch Foreign Minister.

"The President has not yet resigned but he told the Dutch Ambassador in Tirana that he would stand down if his party loses the upcoming elections," Mr van Mierlo said.

Tirana's shattered authorities are now further divided between those whose sympathies lie with Mr Berisha, those loyal to the fledgling four-day-old Government of National Reconciliation and others supporting the insurrectionists.

As the capital grapples with lawlessness and rebellion, vigilante groups are trying to retake control from the mobs. The defence force at Tirana airport, for example, includes baggage handlers and waiters who have fortified their positions using luggage trolleys and check-in desks.

It is ironic that the insurrection, which began to over-

throw Albania's perceived dictatorship, has given rise to even worse repression. Responding to a call from the new Minister of Justice on Saturday, hundreds of volunteers have joined isolated police units for a bounty of \$200 dollars (£125) a month plus police pay of a further \$100. They do not have to produce any references but are given a gun and ammunition, and impose their own law at will.

"We are going through a new dictatorship," said a youth in Lezhe, a small town north of Tirana. "The police can beat you up for offences that once you would be forgiven for. We are fed up with the fascists."

The arrival of the auxiliaries has stabilised the situation in the centre of Tirana more than anywhere else, but elsewhere Albanian roads resemble scenes from spaghetti western. Child stop travellers to sell their ammunition while rival forces vie for control.

One northern Tirana suburb is held by a group named "the Chechen". Originally from mountainous country in northern Albania, heavily armed men in hard-core Berisha loyalty and vow to fight any attempt to remove him with force. "If he resigns it's war," said one of the group's commanders. "We don't care about the Government, but we'll fight to protect our President."

On a roadway between Tirana and Borzane government police and their new hired gunmen fought with each other after the "volunteers" began beating up a driver and passenger of a car for no apparent reason. "On yesterday they were killed said a young uniformed policeman in disgust. "Now they are killers with a licence."

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Anarchy feeds arms trade in Balkans

By JAMES PETTIFER

REPORTS yesterday of Kosovo Albanians buying weapons in Durrës and Vlorë are bound to send chills down regional spines and Albania's neighbours are preparing for the worst. The \$300 package in Durrës is for about a dozen AK-47s and a vanload of ammunition.

Controlling small arms transfers in the Balkans is a near-impossibility. Closing borders may help, but not much. In the north, the Dinaric Alps on the Montenegrin border are a good barrier and crossings are heavily policed by tough squads of Milosevic-trained heavies. But the Buna River, once the frontier of the Ottoman world, let through gallons of diesel despite United Nations sanctions.

To the northeast, 90 per cent Albanian-inhabited Kosovo in southeast Serbia is problematic. It seems inevitable that the Kosovo Liberation Army can move supplies on remote paths in the Black Drin valley to their growing guerrilla movement.

It is in Macedonia, in the east, that the risk of a wider conflict may be greatest. The 25 per cent Albanian minority live along the border and are dissatisfied with their status.

To the south, Greece's problems concern people, not guns — thousands may well swell the normal refugee flow.

The bringers of humanitarian aid face a dilemma. Crossing any Albanian border is not a step a neighbour will take in a hurry. Their overwhelming impulse is to seal off the country.

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41 FREE CAL

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Zealous apostle of competition lays down EU law in the marketplace

If the name Karel van Miert rings any bells in Britain, it probably also brings images of European Union inspectors raiding the Football Association or Brussels' threats to block British Airways from joining forces with American Airlines.

Mr van Miert, the Commissioner who polices the rules of competition, was the man behind both of those actions. The London raid, one of several in Europe last year, has confirmed suspicions of abuse in the pricing of match balls and FIFA, the world football body, can expect legal action, officials say.

In the BA affair, the usually



amiable Belgian had no qualms about calling Robert Avling, the airline boss, a liar when he dropped into his office in January. His offence had been to suggest that the Commissioner was gunning

for BA after nodding through rival alliances.

The deceptively mild-looking Commissioner enjoys little favour in Britain, where politicians have charged him with interference or bowing to political pressure to approve bail-outs of dinosaur enterprises in other states. But Mr van Miert, one of the few commissioners with real power, has stirred hostility everywhere in the EU, as he has axed monopolies, resisted mergers and picked fights with governments.

Outside Britain, however, he is usually branded as the agent of "Anglo-Saxon" doctrine, an opponent of "social

Europe" who stops governments saving jobs. In France, where he put the squeeze on the Crédit Lyonnais bank and other teetering behemoths, he is now under attack for refusing to approve aid to the textile industry. The Germans have not recovered from his bitter offensive last year to stop them giving state payouts to Volkswagen and failing shipyards.

The farmer's son from Flanders has also become a villain at home for forcing the closure of steel mills in French-speaking Wallonia. He has just restored some credit by blocking aid to the Spanish operations of Renault

in retaliation for its abrupt closure of its Belgian plant. That action has exposed him to French charges of Belgian pique.

This week, the grumbling will come from America when Mr van Miert reaches out to far away Seattle. He is to launch a full investigation to decide whether the Boeing company's £8 billion takeover of McDonnell Douglas will hurt the European aerospace business.

Philip Condit, Boeing's chief, who is under no illusion about Mr van Miert's potential for causing trouble, pleaded his case in

Brussels last week. Mr van Miert, 55, shrugs off the hostility. The universal protest, he says, is a sign of his even-handedness as he umpires the European playing field.

The zeal of the trust-busting Belgian was an unpleasant surprise for those who were relieved in 1993 when Jacques Delors, then President of the Commission, appointed him to succeed the "ultra-liberal" Sir Leon Brittan.

As a former leader of the Flemish Socialist Party, he had been expected to take a more "humane" view towards job protection.

In his defence he says: "If you accept the idea that the market economy is the best system, or the least bad, then you have to make sure that it works so that our economies can create jobs."

Some supporters are surprised by the emotion which Mr van Miert applies to his crusade. Erkki Liikanen, the Finnish commissioner, says: "For a man of the north, he is very Latin. He gets angry."

British officials, bating for BA, say Mr van Miert's emotions are still those of a continental leftist and they detect an old-fashioned aver-

sion to the commercial success of BA.

Mr van Miert is confident that he will see off a high challenge to his fief. This is a drive by Germany to strip the Commission of its powers over competition and hand them to a new agency outside Brussels. Bonn says the Commission should not initiate policy as well as police it.

Mr van Miert dismisses the scheme as wrongheaded. Why add another level of red tape, he argues, for a body that would probably be more prone to government pressure than the Commission?

CHARLES BREMNER

KGB man opens old sores over atom spies

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

A RETIRED KGB agent reopened an historical sore for the United States yesterday, claiming that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the couple American executed for espionage in 1953, were not directly involved in selling secrets of the atom bomb to Russia.

Aleksandr Feklisov, in separate interviews with American newspapers yesterday, said the couple were unjustly executed after their sensational treason trial. He described as absurd the sentencing judge's assertion that the couple had "altered the course of human history".

However, the former KGB colonel who acted as Julius Rosenberg's controller in New York, said he had handed him dozens of military secrets, including an early "smart bomb" mechanism.

The deaths of the Rosenbergs have remained one of the most divisive and enduring controversies in modern American history. They went to their deaths insisting that they were the innocent victims of a government conspiracy.

Mr Feklisov, 86, insisted that Ethel Rosenberg had never had any direct contact with Soviet intelligence and that her husband "didn't understand anything about the atomic bomb and couldn't help us".

Europe's workers march on Brussels to defend jobs

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

THE pain of the Continent's chronic unemployment spilled on to the streets of Brussels yesterday when tens of thousands marched through the seat of the European Union institutions, turning their wrath on its failure to set limits to the free market for the sake of jobs.

The abrupt closure of Belgium's Renault plant at Vilvoorde was the trigger for what the organisers called the first "pan-European march", attended by union leaders and prominent leftwingers such as Lionel Jospin, chief of the French Socialist party and former presidential candidate. Police said 50,000 people trudged the two miles from Brussels North Station to its South Station, while organisers estimated the figure at 150,000.

Pride of place was given to a hanging effigy of Louis Schweitzer, the chief of the French car company, who gave the order to dismiss the 3,000 workers of Vilvoorde, turning the suburban plant into a symbol of Europe's anger over unemployment, which is at an average of 12 per cent.

The slogans and chants of thousands of workers and their families, mainly from

Belgium, France, The Netherlands and Germany, were aimed less at Renault than at the pain inflicted by the rigours of the deregulated market and what is widely seen as the EU's failure to protect its workers.

"Europe equals free movement of unemployment", said one slogan. "No to a Europe of money. For work and Social Europe", said another. Robert Hue, leader of the French Communist Party, said: "Today we are attending the burial of Maastricht."

The 1992 treaty, which sets tough fiscal conditions for economic and monetary union, has become a byword for what the unions and much of the continental public see as the onset of untrammelled "Anglo-Saxon" capitalism in the EU.

Yesterday's spectacular demonstration followed noisy protests by thousands of striking miners in Bonn and unrest in France and Belgium as unemployment shows no sign of abating.

The Renault closure, which boosted the company's shares, shocked politicians in Brussels and across the Continent into pledging tougher action to preserve the "European social model", the jargon for the

labour regulation and welfare system which is gradually unravelling under pressure from the globalised economy. Criticism of Renault focused on the company's failure to give its workers any hint of the plant's imminent closure.

Meeting in Rotterdam yesterday, the EU's social affairs ministers called for a code of conduct to ensure a period of consultation with workers whenever a business wants to close.

Some politicians in yesterday's peaceful march sought to distance themselves from the criticism of the EU and Maastricht. M Jospin, whose party was founded by the late President Mitterrand, said: "We need a better balance in the European economic and social model. It has gone too far in liberalisation."

Renault sales in Belgium were reported to have dropped by 40 per cent since the Vilvoorde affair began two weeks ago.

Paris: Several thousand doctors and striking staff at state-run Paris hospitals marched in protest against new rules limiting the money they spend in their practice. They claim the Government wants them to "ration care". (AP)



Renault workers from France join their Belgian colleagues in Brussels yesterday

WORLD SUMMARY

Knee injury setback for summit

Washington: The injury to President Clinton's right knee has delayed his Helsinki summit meeting with President Yeltsin by a day (Tom Rhodes writes).

The White House said yesterday the 4-day summit would start Friday to re-attach the quadriceps tendon he tore at the Florida home of Greg Norman, the golfer. The President will leave Washington on Wednesday and arrive in Finland on Thursday.

Bride in refuge

Islamabad: Salma Waheed, 22, the bride who disappeared after winning the Pakistani Supreme Court's sanction for her marriage, is safe in a women's shelter here after seeking refuge, the shelter director said. She vanished after she said she had been threatened by relations angry that she married without her parents' approval. (AP)

Rifkind rebuffed

Hong Kong: Li Peng, the Chinese Prime Minister, said that Britain would not have the right to "meddle in Hong Kong affairs" after the transfer of sovereignty on July 1 (Jonathan Mirsky writes). He was commenting on a statement by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, that he intended to monitor the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

Toast to health

Moscow: Russian doctors in the southern city of Krasnodar claim to have invented a vodka that is truly good for health. Containing silver ions and passed through a magnetic field, it is said to have "antibiotic qualities and a curative effect". (Reuters)

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US plans mother of all warships

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

THE AMERICAN Navy has designed its latest ship with pregnant sailors in mind. The LPD17, an amphibious transport and assault vessel, which will ferry Marines into future war zones, is thought to be the first fighting ship in the world produced to accommodate expectant mothers.

Such is the Pentagon's adherence to the creed of mixed-gender opportunities that naval architects were ordered to consider pregnant women from the first stage of work on the assault vessel and to make every effort to ensure life on board will be comfortable.

Design notes from the project, newly published, paid detailed attention to safety measures for "pregnant sailors and Marines up to the twentieth week of pregnancy" and their unborn babies. Designers were asked to identify "spaces that are hazardous to foetuses".

Captain Mike John, a Navy spokesman, said that all American naval vessels are now designed "from keel up" for women on board.

Thomas Duffy, editor of *Inside the Navy*, said tours of duty on board an LPD17 can last up to six months, and the design briefings appeared to indicate that the Navy was preparing to cope with pregnancies that started during those months.

"A sailor might become pregnant during a deployment. That is why the Navy needs to take these things into account," he said.

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Bluffer's guide to the world of science

Anjana Ahuja on a layman's lesson in the intricacies of modern scientific theory

If you have ever wanted to learn how to bluff your way in science, then this is the perfect time to start. Why? Because over the next few weeks, the entire country will be under siege from men and women in white coats.

National Science Engineering and Technology Week, otherwise known as Set 97, started on Friday. It will be followed by the Edinburgh International Science Festival, which runs until early April.

For the interested non-specialist, a guide to the latest ideas will be essential — which is where *Who's Afraid of Schrödinger's Cat?* comes in. A witty, readable collection of mini-essays, it provides a useful overview of current science.

FUZZY LOGIC

WESTERN logic began with Aristotle and is modelled on the precise thinking and categories of mathematics. In mathematics, 2 plus 2 equals 4, never 4½ or 5. In logic, A is either A or not A; it is never both A and not A. It has been an all-or-nothing logic that admits neither contradictions nor shades of grey.

But fuzzy logic is at home with

contradictions. It is a logic that stresses matters of degree and all those shades of grey that exist between black and white. A chief proponent of fuzzy logic, the mathematician Bart Kosko, illustrates the principle with an apple. An Aristotelian would say that it either is or is not an apple. But what happens when we take a bite? Is it still an apple? Perhaps we take another bite, and still another, until there is nothing left. At some point the apple changes from an apple to a non-apple.

The half apple is a "fuzzy" apple, a key to understanding fuzzy technology. Suppose engineers want to make an intelligent traffic light that can time itself to change from red to green at different intervals, depending upon how light or heavy the traffic flow is. The binary switch of a digital computer is too crude to do this. Binary switches are either on or off. But fuzzy chips that allow traffic lights to readjust constantly have now been invented.

Fuzzy chips and machine circuits are modelled on the brain's own system of neural nets, in which each neuron is connected in a "messy" way to up to 10,000 other neurons. Like these brain



The mysterious world of the mad professor will become more accessible if you mug up on the terminology of modern science

circuits, fuzzy chips learn as they go, constantly readjusting.

THE GAME OF LIFE

THE Game of Life was devised by John Conway, an English mathematician. The rules of the game are simple. A computer screen begins with a random pattern of black and white squares. White squares represent living cells and black ones, dead cells.

In the next step, each square responds to what is happening in its neighbourhood of eight adja-

cent squares. If there are too many white squares, it dies of overcrowding; too few, and life is not possible.

Only if a square has two or three living neighbours (white squares) will it live in the next generation. Likewise, a dead square (black) will come to life if it has two or three white neighbours.

As the computer goes through successive steps, colonies of white cells grow and oscillate or "breathe". Others break off and wander around the screen. Some shapes look like parasites that eat everything in their path. Using an

extremely simple algorithm, Conway made a computer screen appear like the world seen when a drop of water is viewed under a microscope.

Since the patterns on the screen reproduce themselves, move, and consume their rivals, it is tempting to ask if that world within the computer is in some sense "alive".

LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE is thought to be a uniquely human ability. But it is an ability about which philoso-

phers and scientists of the mind continue to disagree. Where does language come from? Is it the same as thinking?

Behaviourists such as B.F. Skinner have argued that we learn languages by association, like conditional reflexes. We hear "apple" when shown apples, and soon make the association. But Noam Chomsky showed that human beings can both generate and understand sentences they have never heard before. And much of our language refers to abstract concepts such as truth or beauty. Chomsky believes that we have

a special language faculty, apart from general intelligence, and that we are born with it. But his attempts to formulate our innate linguistic rules have had only limited success.

Chomsky says that we can apply the rules of any linguistic system correctly without knowing the meanings of the words involved. If true, this would lend great support to the argument that the brain functions like a computer, with language as its software. But there are only limited cases where it applies.

According to Steven Pinker, language is acquired through evolution. Our ancestors found they could survive more effectively if they could speak, so those with the ability won the evolutionary race. Critics of Pinker, among them Chomsky, feel evolution is an inadequate explanation of how language appeared so suddenly and so exclusively.

THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING

A THEORY of Everything is a longed-for, all-embracing theory of the Universe that will unify matter, forces and curved space-time in one grand picture that applies from the first split second after the Big Bang. Such a theory has not been achieved so far.

Before the Universe was 10⁻³⁶ seconds old, our physics can successfully describe one kind of matter, one kind of force and curved space-time. But the three things cannot be combined.

Of course, it remains the physicists' assumption that a Theory of Everything actually exists and that scientists merely have to look for it. Armed with such a theory, physicists could calculate in principle all the properties and processes of elementary particles. Physics itself would not necessarily come to an end; interesting and difficult problems will still exist. But if a Theory of Everything was achieved, there would be a feeling that physics had at last touched the ultimate level of matter.

Adapted from *Who's Afraid of Schrödinger's Cat?* by Ian Marshall and Danar Zohar, published on April 10 by Bloomsbury (£19.99). To order call 01634 297123.

A new way to identify polymers □ How race affects metabolism □ Setting a trap for antimatter □ The 2,400-year-old fingerprints

Polyana puts a name to plastic

A TEAM at Southampton University has solved one of the great conundrums of materials science — how to tell one plastic from another quickly and easily.

Even for experts it is extremely difficult to distinguish plastics, which is vital if they are to be recycled. "If you mix different plastics together and try to melt them down, you just get a big mess," says Peter Mucci, head of the Prototype Group in the mechanical engineering department at Southampton.

"The industry has got so good at mimicking other's products that they look identical even when they're not. In a car, for example, the plastic in the ashtray is designed to

resist heat, while the fascia is made of plastic designed to resist impact — but they both look the same".

Ford, which supported the research, is now using one of the university's machines on a car dismantling line in Germany. The operator shines an infra-red light at a flat section of each piece of plastic and gets a readout saying what the plastic is, together with a "match value" — a measure of the



SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

reliability of the identification.

"It might say this is PVC, and the identification is 90 per cent certain," Mr Mucci says. "If the certainty is low, the operator knows it may not be the right material." Soon the public will be able to try the machine at the Science Museum in London. The

machine, called Polyana, for polymer analyser, measures the spectrum of the infra-red radiation reflected from the

sample. This is determined by the molecular structure of the plastic.

Polyana can identify up to 200 plastics in three seconds. "You do need a half-decent surface to bounce the radiation off," says Mr Mucci, "but almost every item has at least one flat surface you can use."

The machine will be used by carmakers, under increasing pressure to recycle plastics, by plastic recycling companies and by other product manufacturers anxious to know what materials their rivals are using.

"This is a first," says Mr Mucci. "Now all I've got to work out is how to make a kiddie-proof version for the Science Museum."

Physicists seek warp factor



EUROPE's physicists have engaged their warp drive, and are racing to trap antimatter. Followers of *Star Trek* will know that antimatter provides the power for the *USS Enterprise*. In the real world antiparticles have been observed only fleetingly in particle accelerators, created by the collisions between antiprotons and positrons.

Now the European Laboratory for Particle Physics (CERN) in Geneva has raised the money for a trap designed

to slow down antiprotons so that antihydrogen atoms can be studied at rest. Several CERN members — including Britain — have chipped in, and Japan has made a major contribution. Lasers will be used to slow the antiparticles and trap them for study.

By 1999 they should be catching 1,000 antihydrogen atoms an hour. The idea is to see if antihydrogen has exactly the same properties as hydrogen: if not, physicists will have to swallow hard and think again about their ideas on symmetry. Warp drives are not on the agenda.

Potters who left their prints



GREEK potters are finally having their fingerprints taken. 2,400 years after they carelessly left them on their vases in a workshop in southern Italy, the prints have been found on pottery fragments from a site called Metapontum, near Taranto. Archaeologists have found about 400 fingerprints, some left in damp clay, others in paint, on fragments of about 40 vases. Analysis of the best-preserved ones, *Science* re-

ports, has enabled four potters to be identified. One was a modeller, two were painters, and the other was a touch-up expert, making good tiny defects on finished pots.

Other prints make it possible to guess that the factory employed about 14 people. "These results are extremely exciting," says Francesco D'Andria, an archaeologist. "We can now set up an archive for attributing the vases to their individual painters, not only on the basis of style but on the unintentional signatures they left."



LOTS of people who are overweight blame their metabolism. In the majority of cases this is merely wishful thinking — by consistently eating less, they would lose weight.

Overweight black women, however, may take a little

Weighing up the evidence

comfort from a study recently conducted at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Centre in Philadelphia.

Dr Gary Foster and colleagues compared the resting metabolic rate of 160 women, 44 of whom were black and the rest white. They were all

overweight, scaling an average of 16 stones. Resting metabolic rate is the rate at which the body burns calories when it is ticking over, and accounts for two thirds of the calories burnt.

The team reports in *Obesity Research* that the black

women had a resting metabolic rate 100 calories lower than the white women — meaning that they would have to diet that much harder to achieve the same weight loss.

This may explain why 50 per cent of black women in America are overweight, compared with a mere 33 per cent of their white sisters.

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MEN ONLY

Our recent series, *Aspects of Love*, found women talking candidly about their relationships. This week it is the men's turn. Below, writer **Tim Lott** exorcises some exquisitely embarrassing memories and, opposite, novelist **Frank Ronan** on paradoxes in the life of a gay man

Blunders on the way to the bedroom

The best thing about memories is that, with a little effort, you can forget them. Painfully, there are exceptions. In my case, these phantoms usually recall a darkened room where bare desire has been transmuted into naked embarrassment.

Perhaps it is in the hope of exorcism that I intend to make confession of some of these tenacious hangovers. But before doing so, it helps me to remember that the afflictions of the past are universal.

This brings me to the tale of Martin Waterman, a friend with whom I once shared a school desk. At the time he was living with his parents, Frank and Olive, in Ealing. I knew them as kind, somewhat anxious, respectable people who were keen to see proprieties observed. The father would delight in showing off his Airfix models. The mother was a round, shy woman, and a home cook and housekeeper of great virtue. She kept her hair stiffly permed.

Martin had taken up with a new girlfriend — whom, incredibly, given what was to follow — he later married. In order to impress her, he had taken her to see a Russian art film in the West End. But after half an hour of considering the sway of wheat fields, he gave up and decided to surprise his parents and introduce them to his girlfriend.

They entered silently through the half-lit suburban hallway. I recall that there were etchings of cathedral

towns standing above a collection of Lilliput Lane miniature cottages. Then into the living room, where he switched on the light and ushered Mary in.

Ta da! His parents were illuminated, performing quite naked. The 26in TV in maple cabinet, towards which they were both aligned, was exhibiting a single freeze-frame of perhaps the most objectionable moment of a famously obscene hard-core flick.

They did not move, as if cast in a 1950s burlesque tableau.

I used all the tricks; tongue, fingers, whispers, kisses

Martin's mother could be seen reflected in the TV screen. Then, horrifically, Frank gave a slight but unmistakable nod of greeting. Michael resisted the temptation to nod back since this would clearly act as confirmation that what he beheld had truly taken place. Instead, he switched off the light and silently retreated, a different person into a transformed world.

Compared with this, my memories are momentarily toothless. Until I remember them, that is.

One that consistently stabs at the heart involves a woman who, despite a long relationship, I never felt was attracted much to me, but who at the time I always hoped could be won over by tenderness and persistence or, more typically, blackmail.

One night — perhaps because it was my 23rd birthday — she gave in to my ministrations. Her closed eyelids fluttered: her breathing

deepened. She succumbed relaxed into the moment.

I used all the tricks that I had read in a borrowed *Cosmopolitan* — tongue, fingers, whispers, kisses, constructed a fugue; when the moment of completion came close, I felt I had entirely beaten down her indifference, alchemised all the base material that customarily separated us and would loosen the moorings that held her within.

I then became aware that the sound I had taken to be representative of the wakening giant within her — a strengthening, deepening pattern of breathing, rising and falling in volume alongside my own rhythm, had altered. Now it was less reminiscent of the exaltation of the soul and more like the dissection of knotted lumber with an old breadknife.

I stopped. The noise continued, loudening, harshening. Under her closed eyelids, rapid eye movement. After a few more seconds, the snores died away, leaving an empty space into which I could tenderly collapse into ruins.

I have always been possessed of the power to bring forth the quality of Zen detachment in women. One partner, who, despite the bookish, *rive gauche* appearance that attracted me to her in the first place, liked to relax by watching junk TV. She had *East-Enders* on at a time when my libido began to broadcast insistent messages both downwards and outwards.

She eventually gave in to what I can only characterise as my persistent whining: the TV was left switched on.

After 15 minutes or so, during which time she appeared to be advancing theoretically towards what I took to be a common purpose, I noticed that her left hand was still holding the TV remote control implacably. Then I caught the slightest movement of the thumb. I dismissed it as an involuntary reflex.

This rationalisation became impossible to maintain when, minutes later, the same movement occurred again; and I noticed for the first time that

Grant Mitchell's voice was becoming more and more audible above the clamour of my imprecations. "You're bang out of order. Leave my mum out of this. Or you'll have me to contend with for starters."

Or something along those lines.

If only things had improved after the closing credits; but she turned out to be an equally committed viewer of *Children's Hospital*.

I compensate for these moments with other, nourishing memories of women who have seemed more genuinely enthusiastic. But you can never be sure. One, a demure advertising copywriter whom I thought I had driven beyond the frontiers of her reticent personality into impossible, fibrillating, almost violent ecstasy, turned out merely to have suffered a two-minute epileptic fit brought on by too much alcohol.

Alcohol is my favourite weapon in getting women to sleep with me. If caught at the point just before unconsciousness, they are quite suggestible, but drink is a very crude instrument. One particular seducee had been drawn to me by mutual enthusiasm for the literary

wino and olympic regurgitant Charles Bukowski. Thus, when she moved to meet my embrace, then vomited reprovingly on each of my knees, I should not, I suppose, have been as taken aback as I in fact was.

Not that I was discouraged. Because, oddly, I retain a sort of addiction to even the worst of my recollections, for all the discomfort they assail me with. And I remain happy to keep on piling them up, blunders and all. This is because once they were the present; so it is the present, that most ridiculous speak, that I am addicted to. And if you are not prepared to be ridiculous, you are refusing to acknowledge what it is to be a person — or perhaps more pertinently, what it is to be a man.

● All the names have been changed.
● The Scent of Dried Roses by Tim Lott is published by Viking, £16.

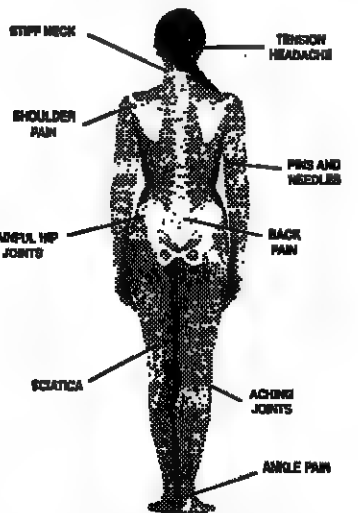
Her snores died, leaving an empty space



Memories can be good, bad and downright ugly — but Tim Lott resists the temptation to bury any of them

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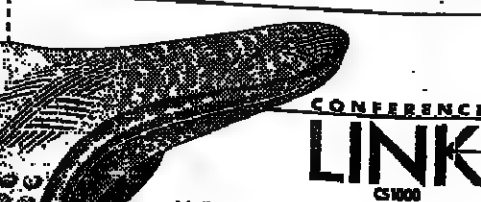
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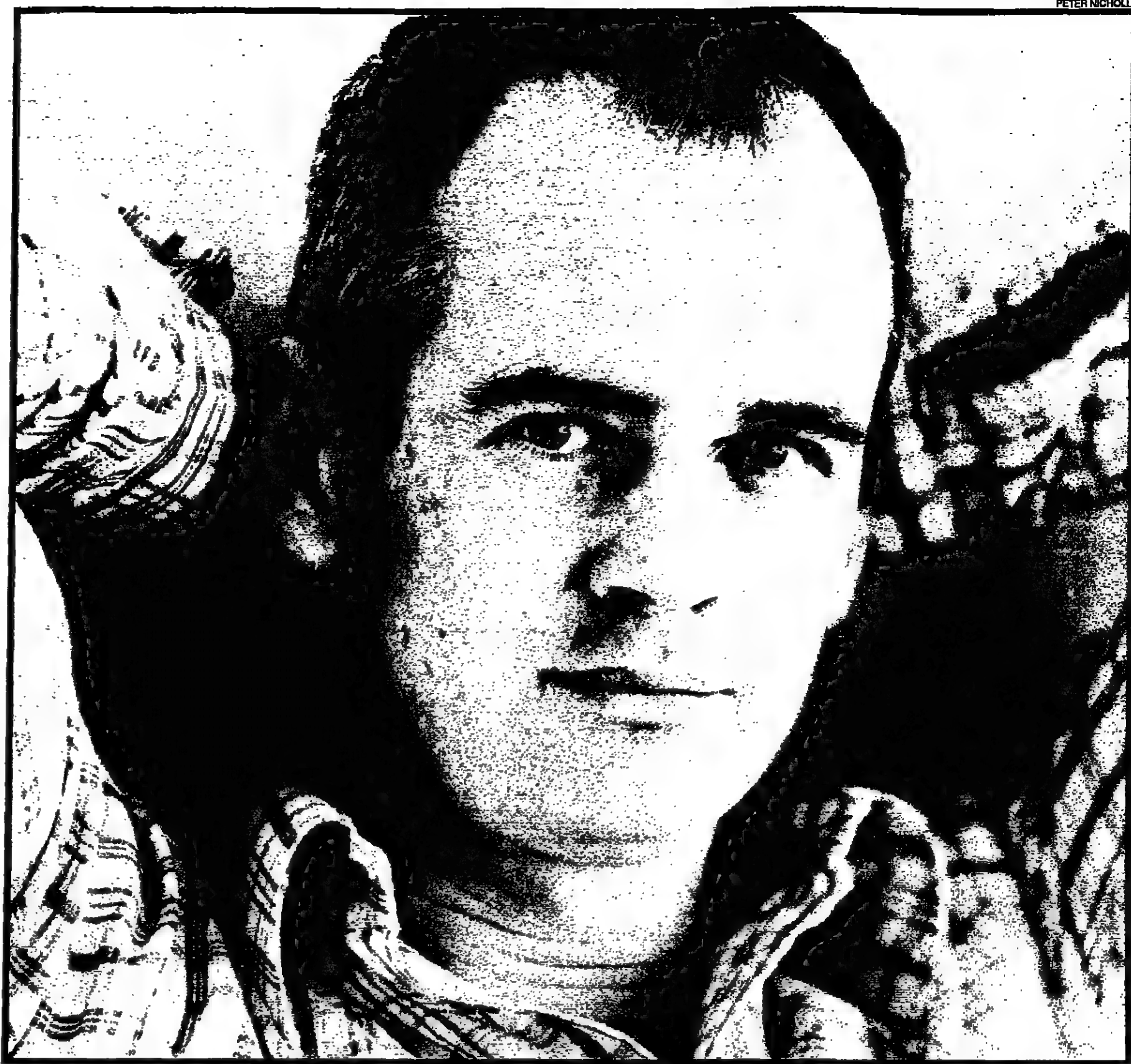
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What if you decide that having children is as important as sexual happiness? You may have to choose between your urges



Frank Ronan: "It is a well-known fact that some blokes fancy women and some other blokes fancy blokes and this concession to reality makes things better, but not much"

Sex is an emotion and, for most of us, a private one at that. In the hierarchy of emotions, it is a hard one to place. In the past it was considered a base instinct, and one which should not be indulged, unless you were fortunate enough to be married to the object of your fantasies.

We are liberated, closetless, unashamed. Millions of us are happier than we could have been at any other point in history. As the world becomes a more educated and tolerant place, millions more will join us and all the barriers will come down and all fathers will be proud of their gay sons and sons of their gay fathers just like it says on the T-shirts in Central Park and these Nineties will be remembered as a pioneering time in which our

planet took another step towards perfection.

Or perhaps not. Sex is an emotion and so, like any emotion, is the same for everybody and different for everyone. Emotions are slippery customers. Sex is a different thing when you're getting it how you like it from when you're getting it how you don't like it from when you're getting it at all from when you're getting when you should or shouldn't, and depending who's defining should and shouldn't.

You can see how our forefathers came to the conclusion that it was easier just to ban the whole bloody thing, apart from that end of it which was concerned with ensuring our existence, though why they should take so much trouble over us while having such a

vile time themselves is hard to fathom. Unless, of course, the people making the rules then were the undersexed: those who didn't have to think about sex every eight seconds or however much it is the rest of us do, and were thus free to become the people who made the rules. There must have been something odd about them if they thought that all blokes would fancy women because the law said so.

In these, enlightened, times it is a well-known fact that some blokes fancy women and some other blokes fancy blokes and this concession to reality makes things better, but not much. True, we blokes now have a choice and if we don't want to be straight we can be gay.

We can eschew football, procreation and had haircuts in favour of nightclubs, body piercing and tasteful furnishings. We should be grateful, but there are a lot of us who are troublesome enough to demur. Perhaps we want to eat our cake and have it. Perhaps we would just like to be allowed to be ourselves.

Blokes who are gay like to exchange coming-out stories. In some ways it is how they establish a sort of pecking order. You get most Brownie points for having known exactly what you were from the age of eight and never once having been tempted to try sleeping with a woman.

At the other end of the scale are the ones who have sired entire broods and were only forced into the open by being caught at it in a public lavatory. These latter stories, if they are told (we are at our most revisionist when it comes to our personal histories), are related with a sense of shame, as if there is something wrong with having tried to lead a normal life and having failed. As though the fact that you fancy other blokes means that you shouldn't want the things that the normal demand by right: children, privacy, respectability and a community which is not necessarily made up of people exactly like you.

My own coming-out story (except that I never think the phrase applies to me) lies somewhere in the middle of these extremes. As an adolescent I fell in love with men but also, confusingly, enjoyed sex with women.

For most of my twenties I was in love with a woman and was largely untroubled by thoughts of blokes. That relationship ended four years ago. Various romantic episodes in the year which followed persuaded me that if I were to stand a chance of pursuing a

lifelong partnership, it would have to be with a man.

I'm with a man now and things are looking good but I won't say any more about it than that because, as I've said, it's private. But the point is, as you can see, I'm a bit of a Flurry Knox as far as my gay credentials are concerned (Flurry was, you will remember, a gentleman among stableboys and a stableboy among gentlemen). Being a novelist, I've been able to turn all that ambivalence and confusion to advantage. Being a note-taker on the fringe of society I never really had that much to hide: I was free to experiment and had time to think about it. But I can't imagine how difficult life would have been if I'd wanted to live in Port Talbot and pursue a career in British Steel.

Which is exactly what I'm trying to say. What do you do if being gay is incompatible with all the other things you want to do with your life? Sex may have been elevated in the hierarchy of emotions, but not everyone wants to sacrifice their careers or their families for the sake of it.

What if you decide that having children is as impor-

As an adolescent I fell in love with men but also, confusingly, I still enjoyed sex with women

tant to you as sexual happiness? You may have to choose between your urges, and it may be that from your vantage point in straight society (which is where we all come from, oddly enough), the stereotypical gay identity may not seem that attractive.

Being gay, for many, is a package, and once you put your nose outside the closet you will find all sorts of people telling you what gay men like and what they are like, and a refusal to conform will be seen as political incorrectness (I've always thought Judy Garland an irritatingly neurotic soak but I could be lynched for saying so).

It's hardly a wonder that so many blokes stay in Port Talbot and keep their sexuality under wraps, rear their children and take it in the shower room. That may be why there are such vast numbers of male prostitutes and so many gay chatlines (advertising themselves in laddish magazines). You can be an ordinary dad

and fancy blokes in secret, but it's trickier to be an ordinary gay and have your kids on the quiet. With the former option you could be one of those blokes who never helps with the housework, in case she suspects you of being sensitive; who lives in fear that your children will hate you if they

ever find out, because you have taught them to hate gays as part of your cover.

I'll come clean. I want children: both of us do. It is a project with so many inherent difficulties that it may never be possible. Funnily enough, in these rent-a-womb and clone-

a-Dolly days the physical barriers might not be insuperable, but we'd always be an oddity: the child would stand out, and children hate to stand out. That doesn't mean that we won't work out a way to do it, but we're up against a whole society which says that we are wrong even to consider it.

Which is a shame, because I know we'd make a better job of parenthood than my parents ever could have, but then sex was a dirty word to them. To us it is the emotion by which we are judged.

● Frank Ronan's fifth novel, *Lovely*, is published today by Seagull Paperback, £6.99

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OPENS: Thursday
REVIEW: Tomorrow



■ OPERA

Hans Werner Henze's *Elegy for Young Lovers* is revived at Symphony Hall in Birmingham
CONCERT: Tomorrow
REVIEW: Thursday



■ POP

Hey, hey, we're the Monkees — and we're back with a show at Wembley Arena
GIG: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday



■ BOOKS

The letters of Arthur Ransome are published as *Signalling from Mars*
IN THE SHOPS: Now
REVIEW: Thursday

To the Royal Institution last Friday to hear the biographer, Mr Richard Holmes lecture on the lost lectures of Mr Coleridge the poet, delivered in that very place in 1808. A splendid turnout, a lecture tailored with care, containing anecdote and analysis in equal measure and elegantly performed between the clock's striking nine and ten as has been the custom there for generations.

In the private discussions which followed, the subjects of chemistry and poetry jostled together, echoing the closeness of the friendship between the chemist Humphry Davy and the poet. Afterwards in Albermarle Street the cries were of Science and the Imagination, how they conjoin and what a world there was left yet to uncover.

Enough. There was an exhibition on Coleridge in the library. What most took my fancy was the letter a young Coleridge wrote to his brother: "I have often been surprised that Mathematics, the quin-

tescence of truth, should have found admirers so few and so languid. Frequent consideration and minute scrutiny have at length unravelled the cause viz that though Reason is Feasted, Imagination is Starved."

It was Davy who suggested that his friend deliver the lectures — five courses of five, fee £140 — to the Royal Institution where crowds for such events could be so dense that Albermarle Street became the first one-way street in London. At that time there were lectures on Chemistry, Botany and Medicine but also on Persian Literature, German Architecture and Moral Philosophy.

Coleridge's series of lectures have always been regarded as the biggest flop in the history of the Royal Institution. Thomas De Quincey attended one of them and described Coleridge — with the eye

of an expert — as so far gone on opium that he had "a paralytic inability to raise the upper jaw from the lower". The poet skipped some lectures, turned up at others with that most shaming excuse that he had lost his notes somewhere along the way, but finally he delivered 18 of the lectures. Holmes makes a good case from the fragments remaining, that these lectures were as a laboratory for the poet (the use of laboratory is mine, not Holmes's). Out of this apparent debacle came his later soaring views on the Imagination, particularly as demonstrated through Shakespeare.

The part of Holmes's lecture which interested me most was the way in which the chemist Davy and the poet seem to have seen themselves moving towards the same end through their different disciplines. The end was to discover



the one power which drove through everything. Davy's idea, I think, crudely, was that chemical force and electrical force are exactly the same thing and that all other forces come under that

scheme of things. I was told that it is still thought by scientists today as a fertile explanation and it was taken up by Davy's great pupil Faraday. Faraday, I learn from his biographer John Mearns Thomas, wrote down at that very time: "Experiment is the servant of the Imagination." Coleridge looked for the energies of the external will through a profound contemplation on the nature of the Imagination. Davy wrote: "Chemistry is professed with a passion of Hope."

The confluence is fascinating and the religious undertone unmistakable. To prepare himself to be the great philosophic poet, Coleridge went to Germany in his twenties to study both the natural sciences and biblical scholarship — in fact the whole range of knowledge available — and he was drawn into the German ideas of

vitalism and galvanism which were setting up a Romantic challenge to the British Newtonian Universe. Coleridge saw Science as a way to truth and also as a great ladder. "To renew my stock of metaphors," he used these with skill, as Holmes pointed out. For instance, when first he met Dorothy Wordsworth he wrote that "her taste is as perfect as an electrometer."

Coleridge conducted electrical experiments on himself just as Davy used himself as a subject — most notably with laughing gas. Davy was also a poet and the careful Wordsworth gave him the task of correcting the second edition of his precious *Lyrical Ballads*. Coleridge's science was perhaps less accomplished than Davy's poetry, although there were those in the audience last Friday night who nodded vigor-

ously at his comment on the suggestion at that time of a Big Bang-type theory that "it is not beautiful enough".

Afterwards I was intoxicated at the thought that for a few years these two men were on parallel tracks. In a way the basis may have been alchemical and it is worth remembering that perhaps the greatest scientist of all, Newton, devoted much of his time and intellect to Alchemy, that Joseph Priestley's book on electricity could play a part in the shaping of Coleridge's poetic imagination and a profound part — as distinct from the designer stick-on of which Lewis Wolpert accuses several contemporary writers who try to embrace science — was an exhilarating insight into where eventual fusions of thought might lead.

Perhaps the Royal Institution will once again become the place in which we are told how the world is changing. The time seems ripe for scientists and artists to unite once again.

Ideas to set the imagination on fire

Hitting the right programme notes

OCCASIONALLY the Hallé Orchestra's monthly Opus series produces something which is both popular and special. Gerald Larner writes. Combine Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* with Ravel's *Alborada del gracioso* and *Tzigane* and that's already the larger part of a cohesive and attractive programme. Debussy's *La Mer* does not quite fit in, but it is an unassailably high-quality score.

The misfortune was that Vadim Repin and Kent Nagano did not present the best possible case for the *Symphonie espagnole*. It needs to be so much more defined in melodic character than was achieved in Manchester's Bridgewater Hall on this occasion. Repin was much happier in the boastful gypsy idiom of *Tzigane*, which was delivered with virtuoso brilliance by soloist and orchestra alike. Kent Nagano conducted with a poetic instinct not so much to thrust every detail into high relief as to blend and integrate and trust in the undercurrents to carry the structural continuity — as they most effectively did.

TWO ambitious series — Radio 3's *Sounding the Century* and Simon Rattle's *Towards the Millennium* — collided at the Festival Hall on Wednesday night for Britten's *War Requiem*: one of the key

CONCERTS

masterpieces of the Sixties, Barry Millington writes. This was very much a *War Requiem* of our times. Andrea Gruber, the soprano soloist, is a rapidly rising star, while Rattle with his City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, its chorus and youth chorus, offers a Nineties perspective, which could account for the lack of a spiritual aura in this performance.

There were nevertheless some fine things. Simon Keenlyside gave an eloquent reading of *Be slowly lifted up, thou long black arm*, but Rattle's big guns were reserved for the first thrilling choral outburst recapitulating the *Dies Irae*. Then came Robert Tear's despairing rendering of *Move him into the sun*. Gruber's assured *Lacrimosa*, and a rapt reprise of the *Kyrie* music for the choral *Pie Jesu*. Keenlyside plucked the depths of desolation with his *After the blast of lightning from the East*. Rattle then revealed that he had yet more in reserve for an overwhelming climax in the *Libera me*, at the return of the *Dies Irae*.

Penderecki's *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* proved an inspired coupling. Its final searing dissonance was for me the most harrowing moment of the evening.



Playing their scenes together perfectly: John Tomlinson as Sachs (left) and Thomas Allen as Beckmesser in the Royal Opera's superb staging of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*

Higher and higher

OPERA: Rodney Milnes sees a brilliant Covent Garden revival of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*

It is too soon to get misty-eyed, of course, but in a few short months this *Meistersinger* will be the last opera to be heard in the old Covent Garden theatre, and it is hard to imagine a better send-off to the dear, dusty old house, or to the resident company before they go on the road. Graham Vick's outstanding production, now four years ago, was always one of the glories of the Isaacs regime, and at Saturday's revival it was even better — which is as it should be.

Among the constants are Richard Hudson's brightly coloured sets and earthy costumes — Breughel in Technicolor — though some of the codpieces still look like the triumph of optimism over

reasonable expectation. Vick's production is so unshowy that you hardly notice it's there — it couldn't be more chalky-cheese different from the Jones *Ring*, confirming that there are no rules in such matters. But re-rehearsal has brought new depths and insights, to which we will come later.

It would be wrong to cite Bernard Haitink as another constant. No two Haitink performances are the same: each one is a spontaneous act of musical creation. On Saturday he did not just give us "his" interpretation of *Meistersinger*, but a development of all that had gone before, new-minted in the light of long experience. Forward impulse never faltered — the six hours sped by — yet a sense of genial relaxation, of sheer enjoyment in music-making, was equally evident.

The last 20 minutes of the first act built to a near-Bacchic frenzy, cannily foreshadowing the second act riot and breakdown of civilisation-as-we-know-it, which he also took so fast as to risk a derailment that never came (all praise to Terry

malevolence. This near-tragic figure (and if you wonder whether words and notes actually justify the impersonation, you don't do so until long after the final curtain) threatened to unbalance the whole production last time, which brings us to the biggest change, the giant strides forward taken by John Tomlinson's Sachs.

Four years ago he seemed bent on emphasising the cobbler-artisan at the expense of the poet: he has now struck a perfect balance. His singing has more legato, more variety of dynamic and nuance without losing a iota of its elemental power, and his response to the words shows new poetic insight: his *Fliedermonolog* was profoundly moving.

The ill-temper is still there, but the reasons for it are more clearly indicated, and the third act was truly a dark night of the soul. His Sachs is still a great bear of a man, which makes the sensitivity he now allows to break surface all the more affecting, and his essential good humour is in no way blunted: he and Allen play their comic scenes together perfectly. Tomlinson's new depths have indeed raised an already fine production to new heights.

EN
"Powerful singing from Michael Chance and Lesley Garrett, and haunting staging by Martha Clarke"
Times

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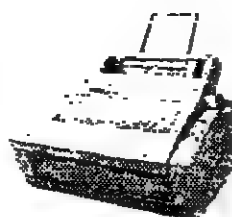
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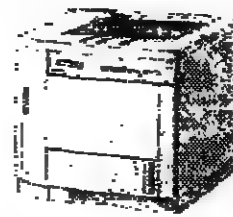
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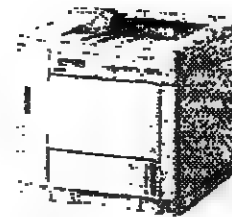
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Locked into a suicidal system

Magnus Linklater calls for a thorough overhaul of prisons

Angela Bollam was 19 when she tied a sheet to the bars of her cell window and hanged herself. She had been alone for five hours in her narrow prison room with just a bunk-bed on one side and a desk on the other. She was wearing tear-proof canvas pyjamas, provided as an anti-suicide measure. A heroin addict, she had spent all morning without the medication she needed. The last human contact she had had was a 30-second conversation with a prison officer through the spyhole in her door. She was discovered dead only after staff noticed that she had not turned up for lunch. Her crime was not a great one — she was on remand for shoplifting at her local Kwik-Save supermarket.

The bleak circumstances of Angela's last hours have been emerging from a fatal accident inquiry into the recent suicide of three young women at Cornton Vale Prison near Stirling. There have now been six such deaths in the course of the past 15 months. To anyone who has followed the details of this and previous inquiries, the pattern of events has become depressingly predictable. They all involve young, vulnerable girls, emotionally unstable, distressed, often dependent on drugs, and usually on remand for minor offences.

Prison, in those circumstances, can be a frightening experience, and to be locked up alone may be the final straw. In almost every case, there were indications in advance of a suicide risk, and though prisons have a strict procedure in such circumstances, with regular checks by prison staff, it has proved desperately inadequate. The male officer responsible for Angela's supervision had worked for only 11 days in a woman's prison, and had received minimal training in suicide-prevention. Most warders would admit that in a full prison, they simply cannot guarantee the proper monitoring necessary to prevent these deaths. Any psychologist knows that potential suicides should not be locked up on their own.

The inference is clear: prison is the wrong place for women like Angela. They need medical rather than penal supervision — treatment rather than isolation. If lives are to be saved, a completely different regime is required. But that will not happen. The reality is that vulnerable remand prisoners will continue to be sent to Cornton Vale and similar prisons, where they will be dealt with by overstretched officers in a threatening environment. Two weeks ago, a sheriff in Falkirk, remanding a young woman accused of assault, was told by her counsel that she was considered a suicide risk and should not be sent to Cornton Vale. The sheriff said he had looked at the circumstances of her case and decided that there was no alternative. She is currently being held there, "under supervision".

A fair and humane prison system, Winston Churchill

Prison is the wrong place for many of these vulnerable people

Weeks and months spent alongside seasoned criminals, perhaps in the psychologically intimidating surroundings of a Cornton Vale, or locked up in an overcrowded cell, have taken their toll. Of the 64 suicides in England and Wales last year, more than half were remand prisoners. That time spent in prison, away from homes, jobs, friends and relations, means that re-entering society for those who are expected to become law-abiding citizens again is doubly difficult.

We need reform — led by a laterday John Howard or Elizabeth Fry, perhaps. Better still, by a humane Home Secretary who has the courage to pursue civilised values undeterred by the baying of the law-and-order mob. But reform, in the current political climate, with both major parties competing for the popular vote, is not on offer. Instead, sentencing policy, backed by the unrelenting tone of retribution, forces the hand of the judiciary in the opposite direction. The judge who voices concern about prison conditions from the bench is accused of being "soft on crime". There are no bonus points for compassion.

There was an unwelcome guest at the Lucknam Park country hotel, near Bath, where John Major's closest advisers gathered to talk election tactics on Friday night. The hotel, a Palladian mansion in 500 acres, where suites cost up to £530 a night, was deemed the perfect base camp for the party's Central Council meeting in Bath itself.

Come dinner-time, the Prime Minister and the party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, were upstairs discussing how to mop the floor with Tony Blair in a television debate.

Meanwhile, Norma Major entertained her husband's coterie to dinner in the restaurant below. Between mouthfuls of sea bass and rocket salad, Norman Blackwell, the head of the No 10 policy unit, chatted intensely with Major's political secretary, Howell James, his parliamentary private secretary, Lord McColl and John Ward, and speechwriter George Bridges.

Not quite the moment, then, for Philip Gould, Labour's election strategist and arch spin-meister to arrive for dinner. Tony spines stiffened visibly: "He strode in and

said, is the hallmark of a civilised society. If that is the case, then a Government presiding over a prison regime that allows young women to kill themselves in despair has, somewhere along the line, lost touch with civilised values. If this were just a temporary phenomenon, an unhappy statistical lapse, one could perhaps excuse and explain it, while offering sensible remedies. But everything conspires to suggest that this is the by-product of a punitive prison policy that sees custody as an end in itself rather than a means of rehabilitation.

The steady increase in the British prison population, symbolised by the arrival of a prison hulk from America, now moored off the Dorset coast, indicates that closer attention to the plight of distressed remand prisoners ranks fairly low among penal priorities. Prison governors protest about overflowing jails, but are treated with "contempt" (their word) by the Home Office. Simply coping with numbers has taken precedence over anything as subtle as the humane treatment of offenders.

The figures are compelling. In England and Wales, the total prison population has risen almost to 60,000, the highest proportion in Europe. Of this shameful total, those on remand have increased from 12 to 21 per cent in the past 20 years. In crude figures, that means there are currently 12,000 people held in prison who have not been convicted of a crime. The rise in Scotland is less, but still significant. Of those, a majority do not in the end receive custodial sentences, and so need not have been in prison at all: a quarter of them are acquitted altogether before proceedings come to an end.

John Major needs a miracle to stay in Downing Street, but he is unlikely to find it in a television debate with Tony Blair. As the campaign is formally launched today, the electoral arithmetic is straightforward and brutal. Whichever way you adjust the polling figures, the Tories are much further behind than any other governing party which has gone on to win re-election. Moreover, the ratings have been set for some time, with the Labour lead widening, if anything, in recent weeks. The Tories now require a swing of votes in their favour greater than any party has obtained during the final weeks of a campaign.

The Tories therefore have no option but to try to jolt voters out of their desire for a change of government. They need to dramatise the choice to make people feel less sure about voting Labour — especially since the multi-million-pound "New Labour, New Danger" advertising campaign has so far had no apparent impact on voting intentions. Despite the doubts of many of his advisers, Mr Major is right to take the gamble of a television debate. However, big uncertainties remain because of the need to fit in Paddy Ashdown (who should appear if there are to be several debates) as well as about the format (a studio audience might increase the gladiatorial aspect). If there are to be at least two debates, as Brian Mawhinney yesterday suggested, when will they be held? Neither party will want to risk a high-profile debate too close to polling day, in case something goes disastrously wrong. In America, the final debate last year was more than three weeks before election day.

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1960 and have been held every four years since 1976. The occasional gaffes and even rarer memorable phrases have entered campaign folklore, but there is little evidence that they altered the outcomes. Usually, one candidate is thought to have "won" the debate, but he receives merely a short-lived boost, often cancelled out later. The Hansard Society is this week producing a timely discussion paper by Stephen Coleman on televised leaders' debates, looking at the experience in America, Australia and Canada. This suggests that even if debates do not produce big swings in votes, they do increase public knowledge of party policies and candidates, particularly among those least interested in

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However, a campaign can be decisive at the margin, tipping the balance to give one party a slight edge in a close race, as happened to Labour in February 1974. Five years ago, Mr Major's robust and resilient performance on his soapbox and Neil Kinnock's mishaps in the final ten days may have been enough to ensure that the Tories kept their overall majority — even if, as the *British Election Study* suggests, Labour could not have done anything in the campaign to generate enough votes to become the largest single party in a hung Parliament, let alone to win an overall majority. But we are not talking about movements at the margin now. The Tories need a political earthquake, and I do not yet hear any subterranean rumblings.

Only the Liberal Democrats are honest enough to tell us what they will do about the two great issues

Blair's majority without a mandate

single currency, but they cannot say so because Kenneth Clarke will not let them, and the Prime Minister has not had the confidence, or perhaps the wish, to overrule his Chancellor. I honestly do not know whether John Major is a closet Europhobic, pretending to be Eurosceptic, or vice versa. The Government is campaigning on a policy that perhaps no member of the Cabinet truly supports. It is at best Asquith's policy of "wait and see". At the last election, the two parties carefully avoided allowing the Maastricht treaty to become an election issue. They are repeating the performance at this election on the issue of the single currency. This coalition of silence is anti-democratic.

Obviously the proposed television debate between John Major and Tony Blair would do nothing to make the party leaders express their real intentions on Europe, if they had any. How would the dialogue go? Tony: "I challenge you, Prime Minister, to say whether you will take the pound into a single currency. The voters have the right to know." John: "Really, I'd much rather not say. No responsible Prime Minister would tell the electorate what he intended to do before he did it. But it is an absolute scandal that a Leader of the Opposition will not tell the voters his policy on the most important constitutional issue to face Britain for many generations. Will Labour take Britain into a single currency?" Tony: "That's an altogether-

er inappropriate question, typical of a Prime Minister who has raised taxes 22 times. All I can say is that enough is enough."

That, or something very like it, is all they would be able to say. The Liberal Democrats are, in any case, quite right about the constitutional impropriety of the proposed Major-Blair television debate. Such a debate would imply that these two are presidential candidates. MPs would be only so many electoral voters, wholly dependent on the

national debate; the minor parties, the Liberal Democrats themselves, the various Ulster parties, the Scottish and Welsh nationalists, the Eurosceptic parties and the Greens would not be given their proportionate share in the national debate. I suppose a television debate in which both Ian Paisley and Sir James Goldsmith were involved as party leaders would be very entertaining, but the main party leaders would never agree to that. They would prefer to have a political monopoly which the British constitution does not allow them.

It may seem idealistic to suppose that a general election campaign should be better than this, but it can be, or at least it has been in the past. Margaret Thatcher fought a much more open campaign in 1979, though many of the reforms of the Thatcher decade developed as time went on, in response to political events. The Churchill "set the people free" campaign in 1951 was not perfect but it was more open. The Labour campaign of 1945, which promised both to create the post-war welfare state and to nationalise major industries, was the most open and detailed of all, though the nationalisation policy proved a disaster. In 1945, in 1951 and in 1979, the country was promised major changes: when the changes came they were widely accepted as an expression of the public will, even by those who were opposed to them.

The big issues now are as evident as they were in 1945, 1951 or 1979. The British have to make two great decisions: whether to keep their post-war welfare state at the unavoidable cost of higher taxation, or to accept plural funding in health, education and pensions; and whether to accept a highly integrated Europe, including a single currency. We know the Liberal Democrat answers. They would raise taxes to finance the welfare state; they are federalists, both for Britain and for Europe. We do not know what either

of the two major parties would do about financing the welfare state or about Europe, except — for Peter Lilley's admirable proposals for funding pensions.

If one wants what the Liberal Democrats offer, more welfare, higher taxes and a European superstate, then one should vote Liberal Democrat with a clear conscience. If one does not want these things then one should not vote for them, but one can still respect their greater openness. In the two larger parties, the voter runs into a wall of silence. Aside from pensions, the Conservatives claim that they will keep the present welfare state in its present form but will not raise taxes. That is impossible. The Labour Party is confused about pensions, but otherwise says "ditto to the Tories". That is equally impossible. Labour will agree to a bit more European integration, but not too much. The Tories say that they will not agree to much more European integration, perhaps only to a bit less than Labour. Neither party will define an attitude towards a single currency; neither party has a policy on welfare, taxation or Europe which tells the voters what it intends to do.

Tony Blair is almost certain to win this election, probably with a large majority. On these central issues he will come to office without having asked for a public mandate. He will not therefore have the mandate for change that Attlee had in 1945, Churchill in 1951 or Thatcher in 1979 — the three decisive victories of the post-war period. He will have a mandate for Scottish and Welsh devolution and for removing the hereditary peers, but not the big social and European issues. "Enough is enough" is an emotional slogan, not a policy. Yet a majority without a mandate like an avalanche of melting snow: it can do some damage but it is "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing".

A debate won't be enough

On the first campaign day, Peter Riddell says voters have already decided

John Major needs a miracle to stay in Downing Street, but he is unlikely to find it in a television debate with Tony Blair. As the campaign is formally launched today, the electoral arithmetic is straightforward and brutal. Whichever way you adjust the polling figures, the Tories are much further behind than any other governing party which has gone on to win re-election. Moreover, the ratings have been set for some time, with the Labour lead widening, if anything, in recent weeks. The Tories now require a swing of votes in their favour greater than any party has obtained during the final weeks of a campaign.

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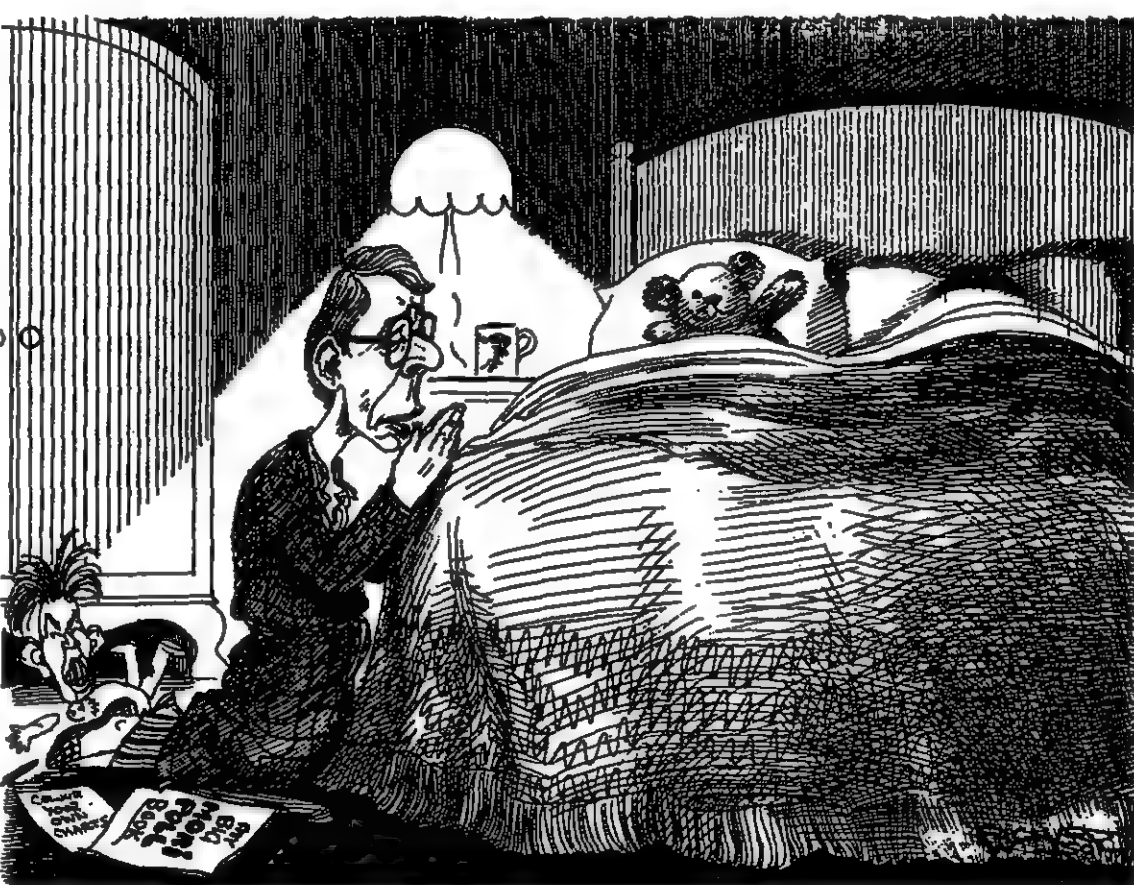
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A televised debate, or debates, would capitalise on Mr Major's appeal as the decent, sensible man with the knowledge and experience to handle the intractable problems of government — by contrast, the Tories hope, with the inexperience of Mr Blair. Mr Major is good at conveying his command of a detailed brief, the manager with the safe pair of hands. But Mr Blair is also fluent, confident and self-deprecating in this situation, as he has shown at meetings with Labour members around the country.

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The main reason why debates frequently disappoint is paradoxical: because they are regarded as so important, candidates play safe, often sounding like programmed spokes-

men. They thrust and parry, but seldom land a real punch. In Britain, Mr Major and Mr Blair are both too practised to make serious blunders, and because of their regular exchanges in the Commons they are much more experienced than American presidential candidates. As important as the event may be the battle of spin outside the studio, starting while the debate is still going on, as the parties' press officers try to persuade reporters that their man has won. This already happens here every Tuesday and Thursday after Prime Minister's Questions.

So I would be surprised, despite all the hype, if such debates were to be decisive. Few campaign events are. Many voters may nowadays be less firmly attached to one party or another than 25 years ago or more, but even so the vast majority have made up their minds before the formal campaign starts. Worryingly for the Tories, there is little evidence that governments can do much to alter an outcome, although Oppositions can ruin their chances. Paul Keating entered the Australian elections in 1993 as the underdog and his re-election was sealed by the opposition's support for a general sales tax. In Britain, the Labour campaign fell apart in 1983, but otherwise, shifts during a campaign have generally been small — four to five percentage points at the most.

However, a campaign can be decisive at the margin, tipping the balance to give one party a slight edge in a close race, as happened to Labour in February 1974. Five years ago, Mr Major's robust and resilient performance on his soapbox and Neil Kinnock's mishaps in the final ten days may have been enough to ensure that the Tories kept their overall majority — even if, as the *British Election Study* suggests, Labour could not have done anything in the campaign to generate enough votes to become the largest single party in a hung Parliament, let alone to win an overall majority. But we are not talking about movements at the margin now. The Tories need a political earthquake, and I do not yet hear any subterranean rumblings.

RIDDELL ON MONDAY

After a three tough rounds, in which the Cambridge man was penalised for hitting below the belt, the referee, Mr C. Goodenough, declared Oxford's fighter the winner. But immediately the Cambridge corner stormed the ring, accusing Mr Goodenough of bias and wielding buckets in a threatening manner.

A sour-sounding Cambridge supporter takes up commentary: "It was a ridiculous decision and the crowd and coaches couldn't take it lying down. They all just snapped." Mr Goodenough had to be extricated from the ring and replaced by one of the judging panel before tempers subsided.

Two tenors were on show for the price of one at the Royal Opera House's *Così fan tutte* last week. The young tenor Rainer Trost had fallen ill, while the second tenor, the Swedish Gösta Windbergh, having just performed in the main rôle, needed honey rather than more strain on his larynx.

So enter the American Kurt Streit, who had earlier in the day flown into London from America for a concert series. Having sung in the production before, he was able

to sing half the opera while Windbergh managed the other half. In a play in which disguise has so large a part, the transition was virtually seamless.

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Fluck and Law's image of a head-to-head encounter

Clarke et al), the puppets' creator Roger Law — Damien Hirst style — secreted three real pigs' heads among the dolls.

"It worked a treat," says the bearded Law, "until some stuffed official told me to get rid of them on health and safety grounds." Law had the final word, however. His model of Tony Blair as a grinning angel began to emit a strange smell in the course of the private view. "They're duck wings," he said "and when they get hot they smell like old socks."

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Bath plug

THERE WAS an unwelcome guest at the Lucknam Park country hotel, near Bath, where John Major's closest advisers gathered to talk election tactics on Friday night. The hotel, a Palladian mansion in 500 acres, where suites cost up to £530 a night, was deemed the perfect base camp for the party's Central Council meeting in Bath itself.

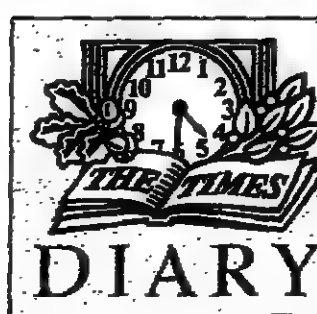
Come dinner-time, the Prime Minister and the party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, were upstairs discussing how to mop the floor with Tony Blair in a television debate.

Meanwhile, Norma Major entertained her husband's coterie to dinner in the restaurant below. Between mouthfuls of sea bass and rocket salad, Norman Blackwell, the head of the No 10 policy unit, chatted intensely with Major's political secretary, Howell James, his parliamentary private secretary, Lord McColl and John Ward, and speechwriter George Bridges.

Not quite the moment, then, for Philip Gould, Labour's election strategist and arch spin-meister to arrive for dinner. Tony spines stiffened visibly: "He strode in and

bravely pretended not to notice," relates an observer. "The waiters saw the problem and just steered him to a table in the opposite corner of the room." From which vantage-point Gould watched the comings and goings of Major's men as they were called up in turn to put the finishing touches to the PM's "you can only be sure with the Conservatives" speech.

What do you mean we've missed the idea of March?



●A kleptomaniac is at large in South Africa's Parliament Buildings in Cape Town. Since Nelson Mandela took office in 1994, 260 incidents of theft have been reported. As well as a staple diet of fax machines and computers, the thief has also taken the curtains hung specially for the Queen's state visit. An MP's gun, a set of breathing apparatus and all the door handles from the ladies' loos.

It's a steal

HIS INTERPRETATION of the Eighth Commandment may be eccentric, but the Rev John Papworth, the clergyman who said shoplifting from supermarkets was not sinful, is a man of principle to the end. Subscribers to his magazine, *Fourth World Review* are means-

tested according to categories: (a) television personalities, dishwasher-owners and users of taxis: £25 per annum (b) drivers of second-hand cars and wearers of false teeth: £10 p.a. (c) archbishops: £220.

Blue corners

CHAOS broke out at the 90th Varsity Boxing Match, which was narrowly won by Oxford at the Cambridge Guildhall on Friday. With Oxford leading 4-3, the light-heavyweights took the ring for a potentially match-setting bout.

After a three tough rounds, in which the Cambridge man was penalised for hitting below the belt, the referee, Mr C. Goodenough, declared Oxford's fighter the winner. But immediately the Cambridge corner stormed the ring, accusing Mr Goodenough of bias and wielding buckets in a threatening manner.

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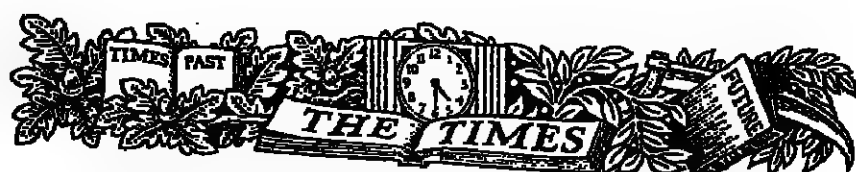
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P.H.S



ALBANIAN ANARCHY

The EU should deploy an elite brigade of accountants

Apparently haunted by their collective failure in Bosnia, European Union foreign ministers meeting informally in The Netherlands yesterday issued their response. The communiqué emphasised their strong commitment to assisting Albania in its efforts to restore civilian structures and the rule of law. With that, the 15 politicians decided to dispatch military and political advisers, but not troops, to Tirana.

In truth, there was little more they either could or should do. Those fine words will have little impact in Albania, not least because there is no organised authority available to be so affected. Europe's poorest nation has slipped into a condition of simple anarchy, more akin to the "failed states" of Africa — Liberia and Somalia — than to any this continent has recently experienced. To detect subtle political manoeuvres behind the current conditions of total lawlessness is to be too rational. Albania is a country in a state of implosion. This might well be exploited by partisan forces, including the former Stalinists, but it has not been created by them nor is it under their control.

For that reason, a comparison with the former Yugoslavia is inaccurate and unhelpful. In that case organised factions emerged along ethnic lines and in a highly orchestrated fashion deliberately committed the worst atrocities seen in Europe since 1945. That this happened, with little restraint, and could ultimately be dealt with only by American intervention, even then of an inconsistent sort, was a shameful indictment of Western Europe. Albania is different. The whole country is embarked upon an apparently unstoppable uprising: a revolt without leaders, philosophy, or strategy in the conventional sense. Its sole coherent objective is the removal of Sali Berisha from the presidential palace. Beyond that, even the participants are clueless.

President Berisha's new offer to resign if his party is defeated in fresh elections would, in ordinary circumstances, be seen as magnanimous and a reasonable formula for the restoration of order. Unfortunately, events have travelled beyond the point at which reason can be applied. The EU are unlikely to meet Mr Berisha: the anarchy and obvious indifference of the armed forces do not bode well for his survival. Those who wish to limit the damage that Albania inflicts upon itself, which is a proper objective for Europe's statesmen, had better turn to how best to restore confidence once events have run their course.

In that context the original cause of this crisis, fraudulent pyramid schemes and their aftermath, must be revisited. To outsiders it might seem odd that the Albanian Government should suffer for commercial malpractice. Matters are rather more complex. The Democratic Party headed by Mr Berisha was lavishly funded by the directors of these dubious enterprises. It also benefited from the artificial "feel-good" factor they encouraged. By these means it won a rigged parliamentary contest last year. This may well have influenced its decision not to apply appropriate regulations to the pyramid companies. Street violence may be destructive, but it is based on more than unfocused anger.

The EU should indeed act in Albania but through an elite brigade of accountants and economists. The essential issue now is how to get that country through to parliamentary elections in one piece and then perform the necessary fiscal surgery that will enable whoever is elected to ensure stability. This may necessitate considerable humanitarian aid in the very short term and financial contributions in the short-medium term. It is the only route by which anarchy will be abated and the rule of law restored.

CAR WARS

The campaign now standing at platform number one...

Whether voters feel exhilarated or dispirited at the prospect of a long election campaign after a lengthy build-up, an old truth bears repeating. However glib the soundbites, however skilfully evasive the ministers and their shadows, voters now have their rare opportunity to let politicians know what they think are the important issues and what they think should be done about them. Newspapers, radio and television have the duty not only to report the politicians but to listen to the electorate's drumbeat as well.

Every Monday for the past eight weeks we have been setting out the issues facing the country. Today's subject is transport policy: it will never decide a general election but it is an important subject on the public mind. And the public is fed up with neglect of the country's transport system. The Conservatives have discovered, too late, that good transport is vital not only to business efficiency and global competitiveness but to the quality of daily life. Since 1979 there have been 11 Transport Secretaries, each staying on average no more than 18 months. The department has been used as a transit station for Cabinet ministers on their way out or a proving ground for those groomed for higher things. None has stayed long enough to make any impression on a demoralised department.

Things have begun to change. The Government has realised that postwar reliance on the private car was leading towards national gridlock and environmental misery. Roadbuilding was unable to keep pace with rising traffic volume. The old policy of "predict and provide" was not only inordinately expensive; it was eating up countryside and destroying cities at a rate that alarmed, not only environmentalists. Car numbers had to be curbed; and that

meant revitalising public transport. But years of underinvestment, especially in the London Underground, has left systems in need of such huge sums of money that there is little the Government can do in the short term to halt, let alone reverse, the decline in services and provision.

In the long term, privatisation was seen as the answer. The Government paid a heavy electoral cost for the implementation of this policy. Rail privatisation has been complex, protracted and muddled by financial uncertainty. The overall shift is right: there is no other alternative to privatisation which will generate the money and innovation so obviously needed. But the benefits, although now more likely than sceptics anticipated, have not flowed fast enough to assuage public opinion.

South West Trains, the first franchise to be granted, may be the first casualty. By making 70 drivers redundant in January, Stagecoach, the operator, has been forced to cancel hundreds of trains serving the Conservative-voting counties southwest of London. Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, who launched Britain's first private mainline service from Waterloo a year ago with glowing praise, has now described the company as inept. The rail franchise director is threatening a £1 million fine. The row has wiped more than £250 million off rail operators' shares. And critics have invaluable electoral ammunition.

The only comfort for the Government is that Labour has been equally insouciant and ill-prepared to offer realistic alternatives. That will not comfort vexed commuters or relieve motorists' frustration. It is a warning, however. Transport is just one area where the next government must prove itself a lot more adroit.

POSTERITY PUZZLE

How to commemorate an event which never occurred

Posterity gives every man his true value. Tacitus claimed. Posterity is as likely to be wrong as anyone else, the American journalist Heywood Brown countered 18 centuries later. Both poles of argument look a little crude in the light of the odd history of Enoch Soames. Is it possible to confuse even the rigorous judgment of posterity?

The British Library is being asked how it plans to mark one of the most resonant dates ever to appear in a short story: June 3, 1997. Max Beerbohm's story *Enoch Soames*, set exactly a century ago, recalls the final day in the life of Enoch Soames, an unprepossessing poet with a small beard and no talent for poetry. But Soames is obsessed by his own place in literary history.

On June 3, 1897, Soames is approached by a plausible gentleman who introduces himself as the Devil. Soames can have five hours in the British Museum Reading Room of June 1997 to discover what posterity thinks of him, says the Devil, if he descends to Hell immediately afterwards. Soames travels through time to the domed Reading Room — he is spared the new British Library in St Pancras — and is appalled to find that he has left no mark on history.

First published in 1919, *Enoch Soames* strikes a nerve with a light-hearted but acute treatment of artists' yearning to know how they might be remembered after death. The immensity of the date of Soames's flying visit to this century has produced a peculiar paradox. The man who never existed and

who wrote nothing worth remembering has now become a minor literary cult. Enoch Soames fans want to meet in the Reading Room on June 3. Spoof lectures on post-feminist analysis of Soames's collection, *Fungoid*, may be delivered.

The judgment of posterity is not a gradual elimination of doubt about the timeless quality of a book, painting or poem; recognition is a fickle bubble. John Donne was neglected for more than a century before his poetry was revived. Jane Austen's original gravestone, in Winchester Cathedral, carries no reference to the fact that she was a writer. Who now reads Robert Bridges. Poet Laureate when Max Beerbohm first published *Enoch Soames*? Few artists can master the trick of influencing their ratings after death. T.S. Eliot ceased to write poetry after the *Four Quartets* and switched to plays, perhaps fearful that further poems could only detract from his fame. Even in his letters he betrays an awareness that his correspondence might be read by generations not yet born when he first wrote them.

Technology may alter the slow sifting of reputation. Digital data can be stored in almost limitless quantities; publishers no longer control what is available by selecting works for printing. A database has already been begun which plans to include all British poetry, however bad. Why should it not expand to include the neglected work of Enoch Soames?

Achievements of 'unlucky' Berisha

From Lord Bethell

Sir, When I was first in Albania in 1988 the country was in the grip of Stalinist tyrants, supposedly elected by a 100 per cent vote of the Albanian people. No private citizen could own a car or travel abroad or practise the Christian or Muslim religion.

The prisons were full of political prisoners, some of whom had been kept in terrible conditions for more than 40 years. Every few days some poor Albanian was shot trying to swim from Sarande to Corfu on a rubber ring.

I was taken to the Secret Police Museum and shown pictures of the "fascist imperialists" David Smiley and Julian Amery (report and photographs, March 7), brave men who deserved medals for helping to liberate Albania from Italian and German occupation. In those days Albanian attitudes to Britain were hostile and we had no diplomatic relations.

Mahomet Kaplani, the deputy Foreign Minister, told me that religion was a plague bacillus and that Mr Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, was a traitor and a heretic.

"It is not true that we arrest people for going to church," he said. "How can we? There are no churches." Three years later I found that Dr Sali Berisha was bravely building up an Albanian opposition, in the wake of a fair amount of Stalinist bloodshed. He piloted Albania to a measure of democracy, with a vigorous press and the freest elections in its history, which he won in 1992. One of his first actions was to erect a memorial to the British agents who died in Albania during the war.

Sir Reginald Hibbert (letter, March 13) is therefore wrong, in my view, to compare Sali Berisha to the Stalinist leader Enver Hoxha. The latter kept his people in poverty, closed from the world and subject to the whims of a Communist Party that no citizen was allowed to challenge.

On the other hand Mr Berisha, in spite of his faults, did his best to build a free economy and a multiparty system. He did not, as the Communists did in 1990, order his men to fire on unarmed demonstrators. He was unlucky, but the path he chose for his country had merit. Soon, I hope, more fortunate Albanian democrats will follow his example.

Yours sincerely,

NICHOLAS BETHELL,
Manor Farm,
Brill, Buckinghamshire,
March 14.

Gorbachev's legacy

From Professor Archie Brown, FBA

Sir, Mr Oleg Gordievsky's letter (March 12) about Mikhail Gorbachev is wildly misleading. When blood was shed these were one-night excesses which Gorbachev never allowed to become the sustained slaughter that Boris Yeltsin permitted over 18 months in Chechnya.

In one case cited by Mr Gordievsky, Tbilisi 1989, a parliamentary committee of inquiry, headed by two deputies closer to Yeltsin than to Gorbachev — Anatoli Sobchak and Sergei Stankevich — cleared Gorbachev of any responsibility. Indeed, as I have shown in my book *The Gorbachev Factor*, the killings occurred because his explicit instructions were disregarded.

On the broader issue of free elections, after centuries of authoritarian government and 70 years of Communist rule Russia could not move to "free elections" and a multiparty system in one fell swoop. Even today, with the exception of the Communist organisation, party formation in Russia remains weak.

What Gorbachev decided upon in the summer of 1988 and implemented the following spring was the move to contested elections (albeit imperfectly democratic) for a legislature in which real debate took place and from where the highly critical remarks of deputies were broadcast to tens of millions of Soviet television viewers. After that things could never be the same again.

A fairer observer than Mr Gordievsky — though from the Yeltsin rather than Gorbachev camp — Mr Yegor Gaidar has said that it is impossible to overestimate what Gorbachev did for Russian freedom. On that he was right.

Yours faithfully,
ARCHIE BROWN (Sub-Warden),
St Antony's College, Oxford,
March 13.

Jamaican economy

From Mr Ronald Irving

Sir, The extent of the failure of the economic policies of Michael Manley (Christianity, March 8) was summed up for me by the cashier in a supermarket in Jamaica a couple of years ago: "He promised us equality and gave us poverty. They have stolen our money."

This was in reply to my remark about the astonishing inflation since my last holiday in Jamaica.

Yours faithfully,
R. IRVING,
57 York Street, W1
March 8.

Sport letters, page 37

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-4046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Informed choice of primary school

From Mr John McNicholas

Sir, In his article on the publication of primary school league tables ("Who will be top of the class?", March 10), John O'Leary states that "parents will finally [my italics] have some objective information on primary schools". He repeats the fallacy two paragraphs later — that parents "have had to make their choice of school solely [my italics] on impressions and local reputation".

Since 1993 primary schools have been obliged to include in their written information for parents contained in the school brochure/prospectus, the percentages of their pupils attaining the different levels in the national curriculum tests in English, maths and science.

It is this regulation which makes the publication of league tables superfluous. Parents already know, before they come to make a choice of primary school, the few (indeed it may only be one) that are logistically accessible for their children. A visit by them to a school will produce not only a reliable first-hand impression but the hard facts about children's achievement in the school. And if the school is too far away to visit it is hardly likely to be near enough for their children to attend.

I am glad that, on the adjacent page (article, "Now, make your choice"), John O'Leary himself admits, admitting that up-to-date test results are also contained in schools' annual reports.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN MCNICHOLAS
(President, National Association of Head Teachers, 1994-95),
Orchard House,
Roston Road,
Hornsea, East Yorkshire,
March 10.

From the Head Teacher
of Dorchester St Birinus
Church of England School

Sir, Many proud pupils, parents, governors and teachers will be disappointed to find that their schools were omitted from the primary school league tables.

In many cases this was because the Department for Education and Em-

ployment policy is to publish results only where 11 or more pupils have taken the tests. Ten pupils from this school took the tests last summer, of whom 80 per cent achieved Level 4 or above in English, 60 per cent in maths and 90 per cent in science, putting the school in the top 25 per cent of Oxfordshire schools.

Yours faithfully,
JENNY POND,
Head Teacher,
Dorchester St Birinus
Church of England School,
Queen Street,
Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxford,
March 12.

From Dr John Herbert

Sir, It seems these days that as much is being spent in education on assessment as on teachers' salaries. It has cost £1 million to produce the primary school league tables.

My wife is a governor of a small infants' school with fewer than 50 children. She has left for a governors' meeting with her agenda papers. I am about to leave for an important committee meeting at a university. My agenda papers equal hers in content, length and weight.

When are we going to regain our senses?

Yours sincerely,
JOHN HERBERT,
Pendryfryn,
17 Gelli Avenue, Risca, Gwent,
March 11.

From Mr Sebastian Watt

Sir, On the day primary school league tables are published, showing my children's school as the best placed in Cambridge, I receive from the chairman of governors a letter explaining that, owing to less funding per pupil this year, they will have no choice but to make redundancies in the teaching staff.

I wonder just what message the Government would like me to take from this.

Yours faithfully,
SEBASTIAN WATT,
52 Highsett,
Hills Road, Cambridge,
March 11.

by the farmers. This will mean considerable loss of pleasure to many thousands of country people who have been hunting for many hundreds of years. It will also mean considerably less pleasure to the foxes, as they are hard to kill and most will be wounded and die painfully over several days.

To describe field sports enthusiasts as "braying asses" and "oafs" is not an impressive intellectual argument.

Yours faithfully,
D. P. MARCHESSINI,
Kingsbury House,
15/17 King Street, St James's, SW1,
March 11.

From Mr Lionel Alexander

Sir, At the end of a long and blameless life trying — albeit without great distinction — to serve my country, my community and my family and friends, I find it hard to accept, especially from strangers, that because I enjoy game shooting, I am a "braying ass".

Strongly held and forcefully expressed opinions in debate are to be expected. Bad manners are not.

Yours faithfully,
LIONEL ALEXANDER,
Clunmore,
Drumadrochit, Inverness-shire,
March 12.

was transmitted.

I would be more inclined to accept Father Bown's criticisms if we had identified any of those who kept the money. Despite considerable interest from the rest of the media, the programme did not name them.

He returned his cheque but many others in our honesty test did not. Vicars and priests were only just in front of used-car dealers from east London and well behind Members of Parliament.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER CORKE
(Producer-director, *World in Action*),
Granada Television,
The London Television Centre,
Upper Ground, SE1,
March 13.

Israel's 'candid friends'

From Mr A. J. Cotton

Sir, No doubt Jews living outside Israel do have the right to criticise her (Mr David Weizmann's letter, March 7) but whether they should do so publicly as distinct from privately, and whether such expression is as helpful to the State as "candid friends" would wish, is a matter on which there are opposing views.

My wife and I had our home in Israel for nearly 12 years. Our son and daughter served in the Israeli Defence Forces, and I do not agree with Mr Weizmann. One reason is that Israel's problems are usually complex and too many Jews in the Diaspora often express uninformed opinion too quickly.

Yours etc,
A. J. COTTON,
6 Cedar Court,
Shen Lane, SW14,
March 7.

Funding plea for London's Tube

From Mr David Bramson and others

Sir, Inadequate transport is a key issue which could put London's economic competitiveness at risk. As businessmen we recognise the bottom line contribution the Underground makes and its role in maintaining London as a world-class city.

Regrettably, however, the failure of successive governments over the past 35 years to match this contribution has led to a £12 billion investment backlog, compounded by a 28 per cent cut in government grant over the next three years. As a result, London Transport has been forced to pare £700 million from its investment programme. This flies in the face of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report of 1991, which recommended investment of £700 to £750 million for ten years to eliminate the backlog. Next year investment will be only £340 million.

Monday morning sees the launch of the London Tube Campaign, the aim of which is to raise awareness of the funding shortfall and to persuade the Government to review London Transport's financial settlement as outlined in the last Budget. The campaign brings together business, voluntary, leisure and commuter organisations in a wide-ranging coalition of London interests who wish to see a properly funded and reliable modern metro system.

As financial supporters of the campaign, our message to all political parties is that amid the recent speculation about long-term options for the Underground, we cannot lose sight of its immediate financial needs. The current levels of funding are inadequate for London's competitiveness and that of the UK economy as a whole.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID BRAMSON
(Senior Partner, Nabarro Nathanson),
KEITH CLARKE
(Executive Vice-President,
Kvaerner plc),
ALAN JONES
(Chief Executive, BICC plc),
NICK LAND
(Senior Partner, Ernst & Young),
London First,
Caxton House, 6 Tothill Street, SW1,
March 15.

Arts Council subsidies

From Dr Anthony Field

Sir, It is not surprising to read that Lord MacAlpine hated his time on the Arts Council (Features, March 7, except Scottish editions). It is ludicrous to make political appointments of people who appear to have so little acquaintance with the council's work or its finances.

Lord MacAlpine says that it was never satisfactorily explained to him why council money should be spent on a tour of *Oklahoma!* The reasons for that investment were clearly explained to the council at the time as well as in my finance director's notes in the council's annual reports and accounts.

In 1980-81 the council offered Cameron Mackintosh Productions Ltd a guarantee of £70,000 to tour this Leicester Haymarket production. This was both to enable the Leicester theatre to exploit its Christmas production and to assist a number of large regional theatres to stay open and available for the council's programme of touring opera and dance companies.

In the event this production of *Oklahoma!* proved so successful that after the tour it moved into the Palace Theatre in London for an extended run and the share of profits from the tour and the West End was reflected in the council's annual published accounts from 1980 to 1983. The Leicester theatre's share of profits was also reflected in its accounts for those years.

Yours truly,
ANTHONY FIELD
(Finance Director,
Arts Council, 1988-89),
152 Cromwell Tower, Barbican, EC2,
March 11.

Goldwyn's wisdom

From Mr P. R. Edwards

Sir, I think Kathy Lette (Diary, March 11) had in mind a "Goldwynism" when saying: "Men think monogamy is something you make furniture from."

Sam Goldwyn is reputed to have said that monogamy was OK in the office, but at home he preferred white pine.

Yours faithfully,
P. R. EDWARDS,
3 Aspin Lane,
Knaresborough, North Yorkshire.

Too close for comfort

From Sir George Cooper

Sir, I have become accustomed to my bank allocating me a Relationship Manager, though my wife is (thankfully) reluctant to enter into a relationship with hers. But today I have received a letter from a magazine subscriptions service signed by a lady calling herself the Head of Fulfilment.

What am I to do?
Yours etc,
G. COOPER,
Mulberry Cottage,
37 Mulberry Green,
Old Harlow, Essex,
March 12.

VICTOR VASARELY

The advantages of the new milk are obvious. It is of course, free from all suspicion of being contaminated with "milk borne" diseases like tuberculosis, scarlet fever, or diphtheria. It can, moreover, be made up in any proportions desired, that is, with more or less casein, fat, sugar or salts and thus can be supplied to children and invalids according to a medical prescription. Finally, the new milk can be produced more cheaply than a ordinary milk and should thus prove a real boon to the poor.

هكذا من الأسماء

TODAY IN THE TIMES GREAT SEASON OF SPORT

GOING, GOING, GONE

Sentimentalists have a field day at Cardiff
Rob Andrew
PAGE 27

PLUS

France's grand slam PAGE 28
England's triple crown PAGE 29

REFEREES: A CAUTIONARY TALE

Steve McManaman on footballers being brought to book
PAGE 30

SPORT FOR ALL

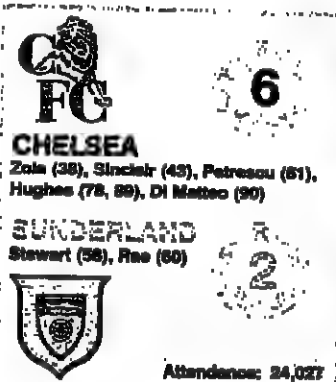
Equals in the field of martial arts
PAGE 38

TIMES SPORT

MONDAY MARCH 17 1997

SUNDERLAND'S PLIGHT DEEPENS AT THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

Zola the man for all seasons



BY ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

WITH spring very clearly in the Fulham Road air yesterday, the essence brought very different portents to Chelsea and to Sunderland. The gulf between a side seeking to justify itself as fit for European competition, and one desperate to avoid the drop out of the FA Cup Premiership, was hugely apparent.

There were eight goals, six yellow cards, all for violent tackles, a miniature fightback by Sunderland when they were three goals down, and for Chelsea, a warning that with goalkeeping like this they must take nothing for granted in the FA Cup semi-final against Wimbledon.

The priorities yesterday were so very different. Chelsea had been told often enough by Ruud Gullit, their manager, to maintain their

PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	30	17	9	4	59	32	59
Liverpool	30	16	9	5	51	29	57
Arsenal	31	18	9	4	51	26	57
Newcastle	29	15	8	6	38	31	51
Sheff Wed	30	12	12	6	39	35	45
Aston Villa	30	13	8	9	35	27	47
Chelsea	29	12	10	7	40	43	46
Wimbledon	28	12	8	8	40	35	44
Leeds	31	11	7	13	34	32	40
Tottenham	29	11	5	13	35	38	38
Blackburn	29	10	7	13	34	41	37
Blackburn	28	8	12	9	32	28	35
Derby	30	12	8	10	32	38	35
Sunderland	31	7	11	13	31	45	32
Coventry	31	8	9	13	28	47	32
West Ham	29	7	8	14	27	39	29
Nottingham Forest	31	6	11	14	28	47	29
Southampton	29	6	8	15	37	48	26
Middlesbrough	28	7	7	14	40	50	26

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

concentration, to lace their undoubted virtue with a determination to win league matches. Sunderland have a coarser aim: to squeeze every morsel of effort out of limited professionals, to survive no matter how they look in the process.

For that reason there was still a stalemate after 38 minutes. Wise, orchestrating his team from midfield, set the degrading mark of studs into the shin of Bracewell, but also managed to show much perception, much accuracy, in his legitimate work. However, Bridges, with a header over the bar, and Mullin, his partner, who forced Grodas to a reflex save, could both have put Sunderland ahead moments before Chelsea actually did score, with the most thrilling goal of the eight.

It came from Zola. Surprised? Of course not. He has never stopped illuminating English games since he came here before the winter and,



Vialli, a late substitute for Chelsea, flies into a challenge with Perez, the beleaguered Sunderland goalkeeper, at Stamford Bridge yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

now that spring is sprung, he has not lost the appetite. Petrescu, the Romanian, created the opening with marvellous invention of his own, stepping over the ball, turning, and intuitively reversing the pass to Zola. The Italian, perfectly balanced, volleyed the shot right-footed past a helplessly stranded Perez, a Frenchman who makes goalkeeping appear every bit as theatrical as Grobbelaar does.

That was the 38th minute, and Zola became the provider four minutes later. Receiving a short corner from Wise on the right, he swivelled on the ball, swung it with his left foot high into the goalmouth and though Myers missed it, Sinclair, behind him, met the ball

with a downward header for his first goal of the season for Chelsea.

When, six minutes after half-time, Wise and Di Matteo produced sweet counter-attacking skills, Zola had the goal at his mercy once again. Perez denied him with a jack-knife dive to push the ball away, but Petrescu gleefully pounced on the rebound to score.

Chelsea's vengeance for losing 3-0 to Sunderland at Roker Park was apparently complete.

Wise was fortunate to stay on the pitch, receiving no more than a lecture for an elbow into the face of Bridges, but this resort to uncouth play seemed only to herald the spirited revival from Sunderland.

On the hour, and two minutes

after it, Sunderland scored. Grodas, one of four goalkeepers Chelsea have used this season, did his utmost to give the advantage away. His vulnerability beneath the high ball was grotesque, his judgment timid and almost comical.

When Kelly lofted the ball, rugby-style, beneath his crossbar, Grodas feebly punched it, presenting Stewart with a free header into his net. Two minutes later, another high ball, more panic around the goalkeeper, and after Melville had a shot blocked by the leg of Clarke, Rae prodded the ball over the line from seven yards. Both Sunderland substitutes had scored, and Peter Reid, the manager, had

reformed his side into a 3-5-2 formation, reflecting Chelsea's own style.

The thugery was not yet spent. Rae, the fourth member of the Sunderland team to lunge into unfair tackles, put Myers out of the game, and out for an indeterminate period. "The shin is all over the place because of the studs of the opposition," Gullit said.

That foul created a cameo role for Paul Parker, a defender on loan, a wanderer of the league, and only the fourth player in 90 years to pull on the shirts of Chelsea, Queens Park Rangers and Fulham, the complete West London set.

Gradually, Chelsea's elegant skills began to mean more than the

effort, the desperation, of Sunderland. In the 78th minute it became 4-2 when Hughes, contolling a loose ball 30 yards out, muscled his way through Melville's weak challenge, and then, as Perez came towards him, easily side-footed home.

The same player, still hungry in his 33rd year, claimed a second goal a minute from time when Vialli, on at last as a substitute, broke through an almost non-existent defence. Before Sunderland could regroup, before anyone could blink, the quality of Petrescu had fashioned the sixth goal, eagerly finished by Di Matteo.

For Chelsea, six goals for the first time since 1990. For Sunderland?

"We've got Nottingham Forest next week", Reid said. "We've got to get back to solid, defensive basics by then. I think the word kamikaze comes to mind for what happened today."

Zola is a terrific player, the game may have been entertaining in a popcorn sort of way, but we have to stay in this division, and to do that we've got to do what was our best feature this season — defend properly."

CHELSEA (3-5-2): F. Grodas — F. Sinclair, S. Clarke, A. Myers (sub: P. Parker, 67min) — D. Petrescu, R. Di Matteo, D. Wise, C. Barclay, S. Mingo — M. Hughes, G. Zola (sub: G. Vialli, 84).
SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): L. Perez — G. Hall (sub: A. Rae, 46), A. Melville, R. Reid, D. Kubicki — D. Kelly, P. Stowell, K. Ball, M. Gray — M. Bridges (sub: L. Howey, 80), J. Mullin (sub: P. Stewart, 46).
Referee: G. Willard

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WHITFIELD

Italy's overdue introduction and change in format would set seal on a vintage championship



Jonathan Davies, left, bids a forlorn farewell to Cardiff Arms Park, where Andrew, right, temporarily renewed acquaintances with Will Carling during England's victory over Wales. Photographs: Marc Aspland



Laurent Leflamand, right, and Fabien Pelous celebrate France's crushing victory over Scotland

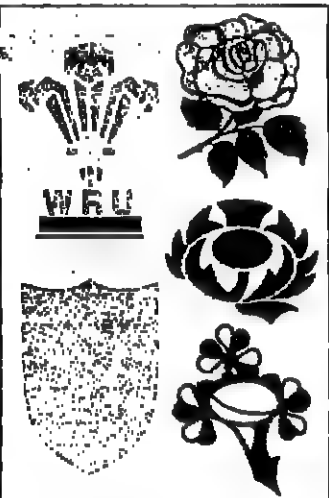
French polish adds gloss to grand theatre

It was a vintage five nations' championship. The professional revolution brought us some of the finest rugby seen for years and unprecedented levels of physical endurance, skill and the number of tries and points scored. Now is the time for evolution. If Italy is not allowed in next year, it would be a nonsense. Furthermore, instead of being stretched out over ten weeks, a six-nation tournament needs to be held on five consecutive weekends.

If rugby union is serious about developing the game in Europe, Italy must be admitted. Their victory in Ireland earlier this season and the way that they pushed Wales and Scotland showed that they would hardly be out of place. By shortening and concentrating the span of an expanded championship, you would replicate on an annual basis the demands of the World Cup every four years. The World Cup is the sport's litmus test.

Everything about a five or six-nation tournament needs to be geared towards what is required for winning at the highest level. England and France will not delude themselves that the standard of competition provided by Wales, Scotland and Ireland is what is required to beat the southern-hemisphere nations. The

ROB ANDREW



emphasis must be on developing and honing the championship.

The point about Italy is that it is wrong to hold them back any longer. In whose interest is it to keep them out? European rugby can grow stronger by their inclusion. Moreover, by isolating the championship for a five-week period, instead of dragging it out, you can assist the difficult process of building a structure for the season, in which club rugby can take a back seat for a short time, instead

of being disrupted over 2½ months.

By having national squads together for a concentrated period, continuity and team harmony are just two aspects that can be improved. By facing the southern-hemisphere nations before Christmas and playing five matches in five weeks in a six-nation championship, England can only get better. Everything needs to be directed towards a successful and, hopefully, winning World Cup campaign in 1999.

The evidence since January is that England and France have taken significant strides. It is history that England threw away a grand slam. When the score against Wales on Saturday reached 20-6, on the bench and on the pitch there was a sense of needing to tighten the screw after what happened against France. In the preparation for the match, it was all about turning that negative into a positive.

It was an honour and a surprise to be called into the squad, and a privilege to play a few more unexpected minutes of international rugby. Jack Russell must be getting nostalgic. I really did not expect to get on. I said to him that, if ever they needed me for a triple crown or grand-slam decider, with five minutes to go and the match won, just give me a call... no,

really, that is me finished with the international scene.

It was wonderful to say goodbye properly to Jonathan Davies and the Arms Park and get a final run-out alongside Will Carling. Will Will go? Probably he would if pushed to make a choice immediately, but he is going to ponder over the summer and, knowing him, after a few months' rest and with matches against the southern-hemisphere nations coming up, he might be raring to go again.

The demands of five nations' rugby, physically and mentally, are exhausting. The toll of injuries has been significant. You need a big squad and that is where England have got their pyramid structure right in terms of the Emerging England, under-21 and A teams. Young players such as Phil Greening can slot in at hooker with apparent ease. An adequate structure, particularly at club level, is where the other home nations are suffering.

England are bound to make up the bulk of the British Isles squad for South Africa. Saturday was an emotional day for oldies like myself, but England have produced some impressive young guns. Richard Hill, on the outside flank, has been the find of the season. Greening is a rare talent. Simon Shaw has made giant strides at lock and Tim Stimpson's season at full back has been about steady improvement towards easily his best display on Saturday.

A RECORD YEAR

● The 1995-97 five nations' championship produced 53 tries, far in excess of the post-war record of 41 and only two short of the all-time record established in 1911.

● The ten games in the championship produced 511 points, demolishing the previous best mark of 363 in 1991.

● England registered 141 points, well beyond their previous best of 118, established in 1992. France also set a new mark of 129 points (as against 98 in 1986) on their way to a grand slam. Scotland's total of 90 was their best.

● France's tally of 14 tries was their best in a championship.

● England enjoyed their biggest scores against Scotland (41) and Ireland (46) and equalled their best of 34 against Wales. France's 47 points against Scotland was their biggest while Scotland's 38 against Ireland was another record.

● Scotland had never conceded a century of points until this season, when their opponents scored 132 (their previous worst was 85 in 1977). Ireland recorded a tally of 141 against, also beating their previous worst of 116 in 1992.

What struck me about the England camp was the confidence that the players have. Mentally, they are so fine-tuned, which stems from professionalism at clubs.

France rediscovered all their old flair and panache in securing the grand slam. They are way up there in the world order. It has been a two-horse race. Wales, for all the talk about their improvement, still took a 21-point hiding from England and, like Scotland and Ireland, won only one match. I do not say that Wales, Scotland and Ireland cannot win a championship again, but, on the professional path, they have a long way to catch up France and England.

Grand celebrations, page 28
England triple tops, page 29

GOLF: SWEDEN REMAINS COOL UNDER PRESSURE TO FEND OFF OLAZABAL'S CHALLENGE IN CLAIMING FIRST TOUR VICTORY

Jonzon confounds the odds

FROM MEL WEBB
IN LISBON

SO THE Honest Joes of Britain did not, after all, get it right. All week Jack Maria Olazabal had questioned the sanity of the bookmakers who had installed him as favourite to win the Portuguese Open at Aroeira, and yesterday he was proved right — just. At one time he was only a shot behind Michael Jonzon, but in the end Jonzon, from Sweden, completed his maiden PGA European Tour victory with a closing 69 and a total of 269, 19 under par.

Jonzon, 24, won by three shots from Ignacio Garrido, who marched through the field to record a faultless 65. Seven birdies and not a hint of a bogey left Garrido three in front of Paul Broadhurst and four ahead of Olazabal, who put the squeeze on Jonzon with an early birdie, only to fade on the inward half to drop three shots and finish with 74, his only round above par of the tournament.

Olazabal insisted throughout that he was still testing himself and his tender feet and that a victory would be pleasing but surprising. That he managed to finish in a tie for fourth place alongside Ste-

phen Allan, Darren Clarke and Wayne Riley, the defending champion, was a triumph in itself.

Olazabal has only the slightest of rough edges to polish off his game to restore it to its diamond-bright best after his 18-month tussle against wracking pain. He plays in the Turespana Masters in Gran Canaria this week and nobody, not least his fellow golfers, would be surprised if he were to win.

Jonzon, meanwhile, showed all the sang-froid of a seasoned veteran. He was 36th in the money-list in his first season on tour in 1995 and was narrowly beaten for the rookie of the year title by Jarmo Sandelin, his compatriot, but went into free-fall last year, finishing 107th. He started this tournament 113th in the

order of merit — now he is seventh.

He had not only himself to beat on this final day but also the evil eye being beamed at him with basilisk directness by the gallery. They made no bones about it, they wanted Olazabal to win. It should have been daunting, but these golfing Swedes are cool customers.

"I was surprised at how relaxed I felt today," he said. "I felt more tense yesterday, actually. I didn't want to worry too much about what the others were doing and I managed to keep my mind on my game."

That he did, but he must have felt a tiny flutter below the belt when Olazabal birdied the 2nd hole to close to within a shot. It was a moment when visceral fortitude was

needed and he demonstrated that he had it with birdies on the 4th, 5th, 7th and 9th. With Olazabal picking up a shot at the 4th but dropping it again at the 8th, Jonzon turned five strokes ahead.

The key moment came at the par-five 10th. Jonzon cast his ball into the trees and, with the help of a hundred or more spectators, found a ball on the cusp of his five minutes' searching time. Elation followed by misery when he discovered that it was not his, so he had to trudge back to the tee and reload under penalty. Before long he was looking at a double-bogey seven while Olazabal had a put for birdie.

It might easily have been a three-shot swing, but a dangerous moment was averted when Olazabal missed from ten feet and Jonzon rolled in a 20-foot putt for as good a bogey-six as he will ever record. Only one stroke lost.

After that it was plain sailing. Jonzon had a couple of bogeys on the back nine, but, with Olazabal tiring, the issue had been settled and Jonzon's birdie on the 16th was an irrelevance. The icy Swede had prevailed over the hot favourite. The bookies, yet again, could keep their cash in their big brown satchels.



Jonzon displays the trophy after the victory that took him to seventh in the European order of merit

ROWING

Cambridge quickly into their stride

BY MIKE ROSEWELL

ROBIN WILLIAMS, the Cambridge coach, who had his contract extended for a further three years last week, pitted his finally selected 1997 crew against an impressive Imperial College and Queens Tower line-up on Saturday, which included seven members of the victorious 1996 Henley Grand crew and Jim Walker, the Olympian.

In the first contest, from Putney to Chiswick Steps, Cambridge, on Surrey, took a lead off the start, and, hitting an impressive rhythm at 35, led by one length at the Mile. Then, after Hammersmith, Cambridge stroked, on his back and a further clash just before Barnes Bridge produced equipment damage, some ripe reprieve and an end to the afternoon's activity.

Overall, Cambridge took the honours and will not be seen on the Tideway again before Boat Race week. Unusually, neither will Oxford. Rene Mijnders, their Dutch coach, took them to Amsterdam this weekend to race in the Heineken regatta on the Amstel River, and they will remain there until Friday.

On Saturday Oxford beat the France national eight, with six Atlanta medal-winners on board, by eight seconds over 2,500 metres and then 0.3sec over 250 metres, with crews from Holland and Germany trailing in their wake.

Oxford continued impressively yesterday. The French won the 750-metre race by a third of a length, but, in the subsequent 5,000 metre contest, Oxford won by seven seconds, with a time of 14min 19sec proving fast in the prevailing headwind.

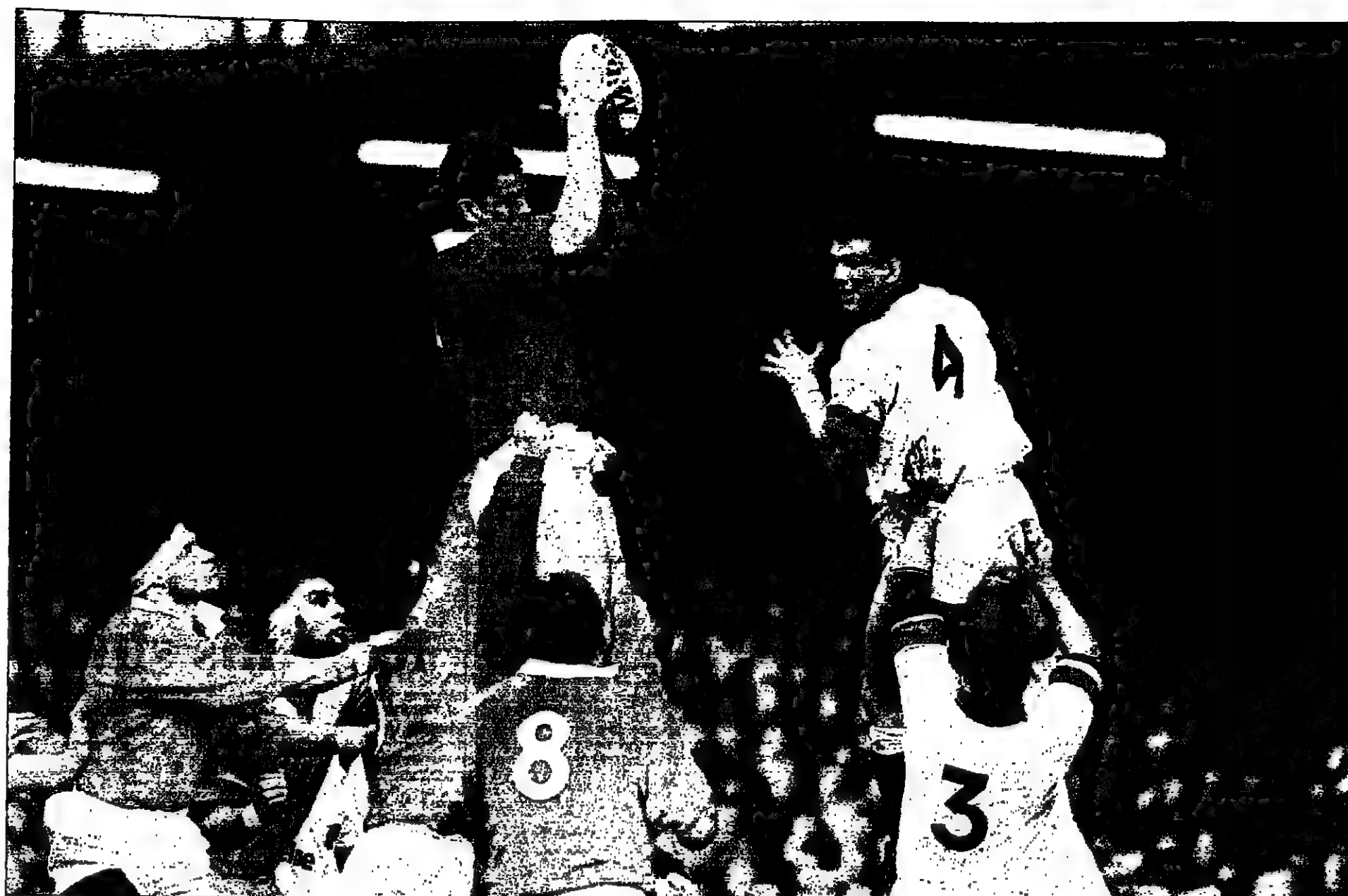
The finally selected Cambridge crew is: bow David Cassidy; 2 Roger Pim; 3 Ethan Ayer; 4 Brad Crombie; 5 Alex Story; 6 Alan Watson; 7 Damien Maltarp; stroke James Ball; cox Kevin Whyman.

FINAL SCORES FROM LISBON

Great Britain and Ireland unless stated:
269: M Jonzon (Swe) 67, 65, 68, 69, 272;
I Garrido (Sp) 69, 71, 67, 65, 272;
Broadhurst 68, 67, 67, 73, 275;
D Clarke 70, 71, 68, 67, 5 Allen (Aus) 69, 73, 67,
70, 71, 68, 67, 5 Allen (Aus) 69, 73, 67,
67, W Riley (Aus) 68, 66, 71, 71, J-M
Olazabal (Sp) 70, 67, 65, 74, 277;
R Sandelin (Swe) 71, 67, 68, 77, 283;
M Moulend 72, 69, 69, 68, J Coceres (Arg) 71, 69, 69, 69,
S Grappasonni (It) 71, 65, 70, 72, P
O'Malley (Aus) 65, 69, 72, 72, M James
70, 68, 70, 72, R Russell 69, 69, 68, 72,
279; R Reilly 73, 69, 70, 67, J Wade
(Aus) 68, 70, 72, 69; A Hunter 71, 68, 71,

69, J Rovers (Sp) 71, 69, 69, 70; A Ceka
(Gat) 69, 70, 69, 71, P Alcock 69, 69, 70,
71, J van de Velde (Fr) 73, 69, 65, 71, A
Tomlin (Jap) 72, 70, 66, 71; R Lee 71,
68, 67, 73; M Davis 69, 69, 67, 74, V
Phillips 67, 68, 70, 74, 280; S Moulender
71, 71, 71, 67; P Linhan (Sp) 68, 71, 72,
69; M Anglert (Swe) 66, 74, 71, 69; D
Chopra (Swe) 72, 68, 71, 68, J Robson
72, 70, 68, 70; M Almaraz (Sp) 70, 70, 68,
72; D Borego (Sp) 69, 70, 68, 73, 281; A
Boessen (Swe) 70, 73, 69, 69; P Cuny 70,
71, 70, 70; J-M Canicolas (Sp) 69, 73, 69,
70, P Gubica (Swe) 70, 69, 71, 71

Decisive victory over Wales no guarantee of success in sterner tests to come



Llewellyn gives Wales an uplifting moment in the lineout, leaving Johnson to grasp at thin air at Cardiff Arms Park. Photographs: Marc Aspland

England wear their crown uneasily

Wales.....13
England.....34

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S fate this five nations' championship season is to leave their supporters wanting more. Commercially this may be a sound principle, but in sport it leads to frustration, to reflections of what might have been. Yet England's achievement, a twentieth triple crown, is about right for a side that must understand how much better it can become.

Over the course of the championship, which ended on Saturday, they have contributed as much unity, inaccurate rugby as they have produced constructive play, yet it is significant that their best periods have come against their best opponents — France and, before the championship, the New Zealand Barbarians. They can raise their game, but they need to do so higher and for more sustained periods, a point that will be emphasised next autumn, when they are required to face all three southern-hemisphere powers within a month.

The niggling feeling as the crowd quietly trooped away from Cardiff Arms Park and the bulldozers prepared to move in and raze the stadium was to wonder what the New Zealand Barbarians might have achieved against either Wales or England. If this seems to damn England's success with faint praise, it is their own aspirations — and their own failings — that have led to it.

There is no more frustrating sight than a side that works hard to achieve an attacking advantage and then wastes it, as England did three times, by conceding a penalty. Admittedly, on the third occasion, it seemed that Graham Rowntree had scored a perfectly good try from a rolling maul, but Joel Durné, the French

referee, disagreed. Indeed, Durné's decisions were not always comprehensible and all too often his use of advantage rewarded poor play by either side.

Yet we should not be too churlish. There were two uplifting performances to admire from England, over and above displays of genuine quality from Tim Rodber, Richard Hill and Simon Shaw. The first, and more obvious, came from Jeremy Guscott, the half-time replacement for Jon Sleightholme, who suffered blurred vision after Gareth Thomas's knee crashed into his head.

After a cameo performance against Ireland, Jack Rowell, the England coach, described Guscott as a "prince of centres". On Saturday Rowell would surely go to South Africa with the British Isles and would probably play in the internationals, so quite why he has spent a season among the replacements remains a pertinent question.

As a makeshift wing, his defence was outstanding and he created tries for Stimpson and Hill, the first of which

CARDIFF DETAILS

SCORERS: Wales: Try: Howley. Conversion: J Davies. Penalty goals: J Davies (2). England: Tries: Stimpson, Underwood, Hill, De Glanville. Conversions: Catt (4). Penalty goals: Catt (2).

WALLES: N R Jenkins (Pontypridd); S D Hill (Cardiff); A G Bateman (Richmond); N G Davies (Llanelli); G Thomas (Bridgend); J Davies (Cardiff); R Howley (Cardiff); C D Leader (Swansea); J M Humphreys (Cardiff, captain); D Young (Cardiff); S M Williams (Neath); D O Lewis (Llanelli); M J Voyle (Llanelli); K P Jones (Ebbw Vale); L S Quinlan (Richmond); Jenkins replaced by W T Proctor (Llanelli, 15min). Leader replaced by G C John (Llanelli, 25). Jones replaced by D L M Macdonald (Pontypridd, 55). Voyle replaced by J C Quinlan (Richmond, 55).

ENGLAND: T R G Stimpson (Newcastle); J M Sleightholme (Barn); W D C Carling (Hull); P R de Glanville (Barn, captain); T Underwood (Newcastle); M J Catt (Barn); A Hill (Barn); G C Rowntree (Llanelli); M P Rogers (Bristol); J Underwood (Barn); S B Clarke (Richmond); M O Johnson (Leicester); S D Shaw (Bristol); R A Hill (Barn); A K Rodber (Northampton); Regan replaced by P B T Greening (Gloucester, 41min); Sleightholme replaced by J C Guscott (Barn, 41); Clarke replaced by C M A Sheehy (Worcester, 70); Catt replaced by C R Andrew (Newcastle, 73). Rowntree replaced by D J Bartholomew (Leicester, 74). Referee: J Durné (France).

finally broke the dam of the Welsh defence. More significant, however, was the second coming of Michael Catt. Before Christmas, Catt was deemed, rightly, to have failed in the England No 10 shirt. Pressed into service against Wales after Paul Grayson's withdrawal, Catt offered his best-balanced display from 21 international appearances.

His judgment was mature, his kicking game — with only two exceptions — entirely accurate, the width of his passing and

his vision admirable and, to close, his slashing run from a tapped penalty created de Glanville's try. England's fourth.

Maybe it was the presence opposite of Jonathan Davies, the little maestro in the red jersey, maybe the presence on the replacements' bench of Rob Andrew, England's past master. Whatever the cause, Catt demonstrated that he can control a game without losing his fundamental running strengths. England's task next

season will be to decide whether to offer him further opportunities — which, given the accuracy of his goal-kicking (he missed only one kick out of seven), they may feel inclined to do — or to restore Grayson.

That Catt was given the chance to run England's show was due to an unselfish display by Austin Healey at scrum half, who started his first international. Healey, whether playing to orders or not, subdued his basic instincts and offered a nicely-judged game. That Robert Howley, his opposite number, emerged in credit from the confrontation was as much because Howley was playing behind a pack which dwindled sadly in the second half, and because he had the individual genius to pick a 55-metre path to the try-line which ensured that at least a Welshman — in this case Davies — left the final signature at the old Arms Park.

That Davies, Carling and Andrew were together by the end was a sentimental touch. The best work of each veteran player was done in defence, Davies playing his heart out in what he must always have

known would be a losing cause. Even before the game, the Wales casualty list was a long one. When Jenkins broke his left forearm in the mêlée that followed de Glanville's early break, they also lost their leading points-scorer and a player showing, in his fifth international, all the confidence that Proctor, his replacement, could not.

While Wales disrupted England's lineout, hope remained. England squandered their best opportunities. Sleightholme was twice denied and Catt's two penalty goals against one by Davies gave them the slimmest of interval advantages. Yet a 14-5 lineout lead for Wales in the first half turned into a 9-3 deficit in the second. The Wales back row made no impact compared with Rodber, who has strung together his most successful championship, and the increasingly influential Hill, who had a hand in the short-side try by Stimpson nine minutes into the second half.

When Carling's fly-half rebounded straight to Underwood, he had nobody in his way on a 60-metre run to the line, and suddenly England were almost out of sight. A turnover allowed Guscott to glide past two defenders and mesmerise three more before sending Hill over, and de Glanville followed him four minutes later. Stimpson would have added another but for a harsh judgment for foul play by Johnson.

Bartered Wales, out but not down, still offered the most creative midfield player in Bateman, and Howley's mean defence (appreciably better organised than a year ago, Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, suggested) have conceded in this championship. To take it, Howley stepped twice off his left leg without losing a yard of pace. What he can yet achieve behind a ball-winning pack may be seen in South Africa.

Rowell's claim mauled by skill shortage

GERALD DAVIES



At Cardiff Arms Park

This was a poor match for Ian McGeechan to witness before he embarks with the British Isles team to South Africa. He will be dismayed at the quality of the sides from which the majority of his players are likely to be drawn. The management of both Wales and England believe that they have made significant advances this season. This is true... to an extent.

Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, believes that his team is continuing to make "good progress" in the quality of its play. Certainly Wales have played exciting rugby, but can only show a single victory in a season that had begun with high promise in Edinburgh. The only game in which Jonathan Humphreys, the Wales captain, felt they were well beaten was against England.

Yet while acknowledging this, they must also recognise the fundamental truth that they do not, as yet, have a sufficient number of players to call upon to perform on that plain. The pool of resources is shallow. The game on Saturday proved what most people had feared from Thursday onwards: that with so many withdrawals forced upon Wales, the advantage had inexorably shifted in England's favour. With Gibbs absent, de Glanville and Carling must have slept more securely on Friday night.

Thus Wales have found the style, but need to put it into practice more consistently. Perhaps they will find more players of the right calibre on their summer tour to North America. England's progress would appear to be the reverse. They have made advances this year in that they now have a well-defined stack of players on which to call and for the Celtic countries to look upon with envy. England can be confident.

Furthermore, they have managed to score tries in a manner that had been singularly lacking in recent years. Their 15 tries contrast with three last year and nine the year before. They have also accumulated a record number of points (141) for their country in a championship. These are impressive figures that should leave them contented with their campaign, as any team would be.

The danger is that they may read more into the statistics than they should. They have the strength in depth. They have players of significant strength and size. This is their progress. They are not, however, playing in the style that they seem so ready to claim. The interactive game that they seek is not theirs yet and the question arises to what extent is it in the English rugby character to achieve it?

This team, like that of Geoff Cooke's, is endowed with power and a sense of firm direction. These qualities are allied to organisation and control. These are the solid virtues of English rugby. To say as much is often interpreted as if this is somehow to cavil about the style and as a sign of disapproval. Far from it. The team must be true to itself, to exploit its own strengths. There is an under-



'Anyone committed would insist on Guscott's inclusion'

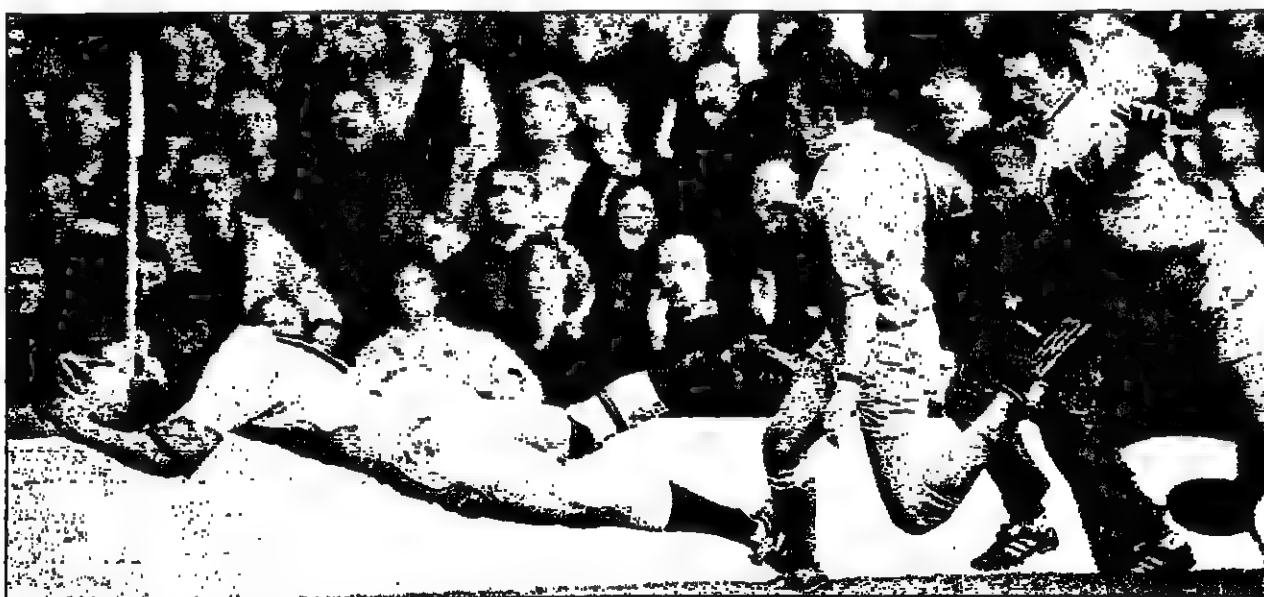
standing reluctance to depart from them. This reluctance is epitomised in the management attitude to two players over the years. Cooke, for his own good reasons, cast Stuart Barnes aside. The solid virtues were best characterised in Rob Andrew. The two stand-off halves differed. The team's success and Andrew's vital role in it speaks for itself. Cooke's strategy was marshalled tactically by Andrew.

For his part, Jack Rowell has cast Jeremy Guscott onto the replacements' bench. Guscott is the silkiest of midfield runners and, as he demonstrated on Saturday, he can make things happen for himself and those around him with a shimmy, a glide and a sensitive pass. Anyone committed fully to an interactive game would insist on the inclusion of Guscott. He is not a wing, though.

Might not there be a certain scepticism in the England camp anyway? What did Rowell mean when he said at the press conference on Saturday: "It is difficult to stop gifted players playing gifted football." What kind of message did he intend to convey with those words to his players in that unsteady opening period?

No. To see an interactive game in the championship this season then it was to France we needed to look. The reason is, in the main, that French back-row forwards, unlike England's, are natural distributors of the ball, not just carriers and chargers. France will avoid the rucks if they can, England look to create them. As Pierre Villepreux, the France assistant coach, said: "If you have to set up a ruck or maul, then, in a sense, the team has already failed. The ball should have been moved on." The last point is that the players generally do not have the necessary handling and positional skills. Sadly, on Saturday, neither side possessed these qualities. The second half, error-strewn, was mediocre and fell below the requirements of rugby at an international level.

The danger for England is that they may come to believe that they are playing in a style that conspicuously they are not. It is their English virtues that need to be recognised and appreciated. McGeechan knows that the England pack will provide him with enough power to match South Africa in the set-pieces. We shall have to wait and see whether they can offer more.



Stimpson, set up by Guscott and Hill, dives over for the first of England's four second-half tries

TRY, TRY, TRY, AGAIN

GO THE DISTANCE

Tempers boil over as frustrated Celtic lose grip on cherished championship record

Rangers primed to celebrate nine in a row

Celtic 0
Rangers 1

By KEVIN MCCARRA

IN ERROR, and anger, a championship was decided. The cantankerousness of this Old Firm match will not prevent Rangers from honouring the day on which they surely grasped a ninth successive Bell's Scottish League premier division title. Their joy will also take the form of a celebration of their own durability.

Richard Gough, who has been burdened with a calf injury, compelled himself to survive for 63 essential minutes, but the captain had to leave his side to cope by themselves with a passage in which they were reduced to ten men. On his return to Rangers, Mark Hateley was sent off. In the 67th minute, after becoming involved in an altercation with Kerr,

Parity was restored nine minutes from the end, however, when Mackay, the Celtic central defender, was shown the red card after committing a second bookable offence, by felling Laudrup.

Rangers deserved this victory, just as they merit the championship that, with an eight-point advantage to sustain them over six remaining fixtures, they are virtually certain to collect. Celtic have, for the first time, lost all four of their premier division fixtures of a season to their rivals. As so often, Walter Smith's side was the clear expression of a careful plan. The strategy may have been simple, but it was also sturdy.

Celtic, although they were to hit the crossbar through Di Canio, fumbled unavailingly

for the form shown in the Tennents Scottish Cup defeat of Rangers ten days ago and were never permitted to examine the credentials of Goram's replacement, Dibble. The English goalkeeper was not and enjoyed the protection of a midfield that, with the inclusion of Moore, was geared to stifle and block.

Tommy Burns's side, who depend on a nimble, one-touch style, looked as cramped as men in a crowded lift. The frustrations bred ugliness and, at the end, Di Canio had to be restrained from embarking on a fight with Ferguson. It was the last indignity for Celtic that they could not even

LEADERS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	30	22	5	3	72	26	71
Celtic	30	20	3	7	66	28	63
Dundee Utd	30	16	8	7	42	25	53

accept with grace the fact that Rangers will now match their record of nine consecutive championships.

Despite installing all necessary precautions, Rangers had not come purely to flaunt a security system. They manufactured the few opportunities of the afternoon and, on the break, engineered the flowing play that always eluded Celtic.

While the midfield player is rarely required, he has never been a journeyman and only a terrible knee injury has mangled what should have been a majestic career. Even so, he still has much to cherish. Durrant's few appearances are the limited edition of luxury goods. He may not have been included in the side since November 2, but his

imagination had not corroded through disuse.

In the 44th minute, Albertz slung a long free kick down the left that dropped over Annoni and Laudrup. Stubbs moved in to deal with it, but glanced his header to the side of Kerr, who had come to collect. Durrant, with his darting intelligence, was ruthless in his reactions, instantly stretching to lift the ball into the goalmouth. Mackay and Laudrup chased in frantically, with the Dane prodding home into the unattended net.

Celtic will sigh over the Di Canio volley that was crashed against the bar in the fortieth minute, when the game was goalless. Their next opportunity, though, came only in the final moments as Annoni glanced past the post.

The second half was notable principally for Kerr's saves from Laudrup and Albertz and for Hateley's dismissal. Aggression had been his sole contribution and it also brought an early conclusion to his involvement. He and Kerr quarrelled over the award of a free kick and the Rangers player made slight contact on the goalkeeper with a butt. The Celtic player was booked and Hateley dismissed.

Di Canio is now liable to be the subject of a report by Hugh Dallas, the referee, and probably faces a suspension. Celtic, though, have lost far more than the services of a key man. "We are in a good position," Smith said circumspectly, knowing that frenzied jubilation could be left in the experienced hands of the Rangers supporters.

CELTIC (3-4-2): S Kerr — E Annoni, A Stubbs (sub: S Dornie, 68min), M Mackay — J McNamee, P Grant (sub: D Hannan, 69), P McGlashan, P O'Donnell, T McKinstry — J Canio, P Di Canio.
RANGERS (3-4-2): A Dibble — A McLennan, R Gough (sub: C Miller, 83), J Bishara — A Clifton, C Moore, I Ferguson, I Durrant (sub: A McGee, 85), J Albertz — M Hateley, S Laudrup.
Referee: H Dallas.



Durrant is mobbed by his delighted team-mates after creating Rangers' winner at Celtic Park yesterday

United's rich inconsistency provides food for thought



Cole: instinctive

A statue of Sir Matt Busby stares out benignly at the entrance to Old Trafford. Before him is a movable feast. People clutch chips or hamburgers and there is even a pig revolving on a spit at one of the stalls.

Supporters shuffle by, food in one hand, a carrier bag full of souvenirs in the other. When they stop moving, someone invariably produces a video-camera. They smile and raise an upturned thumb. The moment will be replayed many times.

If, months later, someone asks who Manchester United played on the day, or the score, the likelihood is that the supporter will struggle to remember. These days the institution of Manchester United is often more of a celebration than the football they that produce.

Although they won relatively easily against Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday, this

performance was typical of a season that has seen United score more than two goals on only four occasions at home in the FA Carling Premiership. Only Sunderland, who were beaten 5-0 in December, can be said to have gone the way of the pig and suffered a roasting at Old Trafford.

At times United's play was exhilarating, with players moving to and fro like flickering shadows, but then it diffused and ambitious moves dissolved amid mistimed and misplaced passes. In culinary terms, Manchester United embraced the dash and flamboyance of nouvelle cuisine but spelt the effect by providing a side dish of chips.

The game started in lively fashion, with Sheffield Wednesday matching United's enterprise. Humphreys shuffled through the United defence and played a perfect pass to Hirst. He swiped at the ball

Mark Hodkinson sees a baffling mix in the 2-0 defeat of Sheffield Wednesday

and it barely moved forwards when it should have been thumped into the United net. "I thought Hirst would score; he has a good record against us," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said.

Giggs then fed Cantona and he delicately placed the ball through a packed penalty area into the path of Cole. It was the consummate pass for Cole, who is a better player when he is impelled to trust instinct and speed of thought. The ball was in the net before Wednesday had even contemplated a tackle. Cole's celebrations were excitable and profuse and may have contributed to a high strain that saw him substituted minutes later.

Carbone, replete in green boots, danced through the

midfield with a lightness of touch that suggested he might have been wearing carpet slippers. However, his vision and expertise were not equalled by his colleagues and he was often forced to double back and look for support.

Pressman made several saves before United reinforced their dominance with a second goal. Cantona skillfully allowed the ball to roll down his ankle and played it to Solisjear, who unselfishly passed to Poborsky. He drilled the ball into the roof of the net.

Wednesday, playing their third game in six days, battled well and were clearly concerned about maintaining their respectability.

Yet Cantona hit a post with

a fierce shot and Giggs shot wide after he had raced through the centre of the penalty area. United dominated the remainder of the match without finding the incisive edge that won them such acclaim after their demolition of FC Porto. Giggs was particularly profligate. While he remains a thrilling player on the ball, his dividend of three league goals this season illustrates perhaps the only flaw in his game.

David Pleat, the Wednesday manager, said: "We have no complaints. The scoreline was fair. I thought at one point that it was going to be a lot worse. I kept looking at my watch wishing we were back on the coach going home."

It was apparent afterwards that the European Cup quarter-final, second leg this week was occupying the thoughts of Ferguson.

He was happy simply to

have negotiated a potentially hazardous league match against an improving Wednesday side.

"We did well today on concentrating on what we had to do," Ferguson said. "We knew that one silly performance could be costly and we did not want to slip up. We had the composure to keep the ball and be sensible."

The victory consolidates United's position at the top and, in a season in which no Premiership team has shown consistency of flair and ruthlessness, their running buffet of sporadic brilliance may be as good as it gets.

MANCHESTER UNITED (4-3-1-2): P Schuster — G Neville, D May, G Pallister, D Wane — D Beckham, N Butt, R Gough — E Cantona, A Cole (sub: R Pothorby, 23min), C G Blackmore (sub: P Scholes, 88).
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (3-5-1-1): K Pressman — S Nicol (sub: A Booth, 83), S Whittingham, P Atherton, R Humphreys (sub: O Trustfull, 83), R Binkley (sub: R Broome, 83) — S Carbone — D Hirst.
Referee: P Durnin.

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fair enough. Coventry could be thankful that Shearer and Ferdinand were not available to turn a stroll into a rout.

Asprilla, like Dalglish, has some convincing to do, for Newcastle supporters do not need reminding that, when he arrived on Tyneside 13 months ago, their team led Manchester United by 12 points. His impact on this game, though, was immense, his range of tricks altogether too much for Coventry's well-mannered but vulnerable defence.

Having laid on the opener, Asprilla's superbly executed pass on the run from the right flank invited Lee to double the score just before half-time. Asprilla then induced the tackle that led to the dismissal of Borrows midway through the second half, and he won the penalty from which Beardsley made it 3-0.

Quite why Dublin, the perpetrator, was allowed to remain on the field only Gerald Ashby can answer. As professional fouls go, it was far more clear-cut than Borrows's offence, yet was not even deemed worthy of a yellow card by a referee who had a dismal afternoon.

Asprilla, meanwhile, was being loaded on to a stretcher, his ankle badly bruised. For a maverick who was thought likely to be the first casualty of Dalglish's more ordered regime, he has suddenly become their least dispensable asset, and Dalglish is hopeful that he will have recovered in time to face Monaco.

Asprilla's departure could not spare Coventry from more punishment as Beardsley and Barton sliced through the remnants of their defence to set up Elliott for Newcastle's fourth. Seven league matches without a win, their performance stank of relegation. "If we play like that for the rest of the season, we will go down," Gordon Strachan, the manager, said.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (4-4-1-1): S Heston — S Watson, D Peacock, M Burt, H Elliott — W Barton, R Lee (sub: J Clark, 77min), D Batty, D Girdle (sub: J Crawford, 81) — P Beardsley — F Asprilla (sub: K Gillespie, 77).
COVENTRY CITY (3-4-1-2): S Ogilvie — D Dublin, G Breen, A Eustace (sub: B Borrows, 49), R Shaw, K Richardson (sub: W Boleyn, 64), G McMillan, M Hall — P Teller — E Jess, D Huxley (sub: P Ndlovu, 81).
Referee: S Lodge.

Everton can breathe easy

Everton 1
Derby County 0

By DAVID MADDOCK

JOE ROYLE, the Everton manager, has the appearance of a favourite uncle: red-faced and cuddly, with a string of reassuring quips. That he can still pull off such an act after a game like this is credit to his composure. There was little hint, outwardly, of the pressure that he described as "bursting out of Goodison Park at the moment".

Only Royle's voice betrayed him as he reflected on an important victory, the faint flutter at the end of his conversation revealing a marked sense of relief. Massive relief, in fact, because this victory has all but extinguished the possibility of relegation. They could still go down, of course, but only if unmitigated, wide-screen disaster were to strike.

For Royle, it means an opportunity to address the panic of recent weeks, a chance to plug the holes that have appeared so close to the waterline. Many judges felt that the appalling display against Arsenal, two weeks ago, had signalled the end of his career as manager.

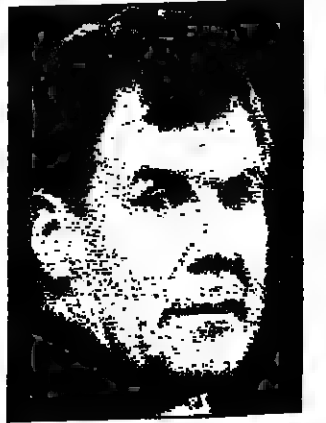
It was a wrong assumption, and now he at least has the time to bring in a few players, to perhaps shape a side over the remaining matches of the

season that will offer real promise.

He knows it. "You could feel the tension building around this place, and that win has really taken the pressure off us," he said. "It means we can enter the transfer market on our own terms. We can buy players we really need rather than going out to get stop-gaps."

Royle's immediate response will be an attempt to lure Trevor Sinclair away from Queens Park Rangers in a bid to restore balance to the right side of the team. In his programme notes, Royle also hinted at even bigger fish to be fried. "I can certainly say that some of the names we have looked at would open people's eyes," he said.

He will have to close a deal soon, because victory cannot disguise the fact that the



Royle: unflappable

present squad will never disturb Manchester United or Liverpool. Against an admittedly desperate Derby County rearguard, they simply flung long balls forward.

Credit then, to their perseverance, because the tactic finally worked in the 78th minute. Another hump into the box, another nod down by Duncan Ferguson and Dave Watson provided a captain's inspiration by firing home.

"We were very disappointed at the end of it because, even though they had most of the ball, they were just lumping it forward, and our attacking situations were more dangerous," Jim Smith, the Derby manager, said.

He had a point, but his argument was undermined by the performance of Aljosha Asanovic, his Croatia international midfielder player, who, barely minutes into the match, appeared to have given up.

With Derby now sucked into the relegation mire after this defeat, Smith said: "We are looking at 39 points really, and we have got five home games left, so that must be our saviour. We have to get the two wins we require from those home games."

EVERTON (3-4-1-2): N Southall — D Unsworth, D Watson, C Short — E Barnett, J Parkin, C Thomson (sub: M Horner, 80min), T Fother — N Barry — D Ferguson, M Branch (sub: G Stuart, 45).
DERBY COUNTY (3-5-2-1): M Taylor — J Laurican, P McNamee (sub: M Carson, 89), G Rowell — L Carlsby (sub: P Simpson, 83), P Trollope, C Powell — C Dally, D Powell — A Asanovic — A Ward.
Referee: G Barber.

Vieira goes in the dock over clash

ARSENE WENGER, the Arsenal manager, is to study a video recording of an incident involving Patrick Vieira, his French midfielder player, and Matthew Le Tissier, the Southampton captain, during the second half of Arsenal's 2-0 win at The Dell on Saturday (Russell Kempson writes).

Vieira appeared to strike Le Tissier, but escaped with only a booking from Jeff Winter, the referee. "I didn't really see what happened, but if Patrick has done something wrong, then I will take the matter further," Wenger said.

Le Tissier played down the clash. "Vieira caught me a bit late and I flung my arm out and caught him on the side of the head," he said. "He then reacted by showing his shoulder at me. That's all it was."

Vieira's caution is likely to take him over the 33-point disciplinary mark, leading to his second two-match suspension of the season during the FA Carling Premiership run-in.

Wenger is still looking to strengthen his squad before the transfer deadline on March 27 and has invited Alexander Manninger, 19, the Austria Under-21 and Casino Graz goalkeeper, for a two-day trial at Highbury this week.

Brazilians warm to task

Leicester City 1
Middlesbrough 3

By PAT GIBSON

LIKE flowers that bloom in the spring may be an appropriate analogy when judgment is passed on Middlesbrough, still bottom of the FA Carling Premiership, but already through to the Coca-Cola Cup final and with only Chesterfield to beat to reach the FA Cup final.

Throughout the winter, their supporters have clung to the belief that all would be well once the boys from Brazil felt the sun on their backs. There was every reason to suspect they may be right from the way that they demolished Leicester City in this dress rehearsal for their first Wembley date, a fortnight on Sunday. If Juninho and Emerson can play as they did in a relegation dog-fight in the confines of Filbert Street, Leicester must be alarmed at what they could do on the big stage.

The other sides in the bottom half of the Premiership also should be alarmed. This victory enabled Middlesbrough to make up significant ground and, with three home games coming up, they could soon be out of the bottom three even without a successful appeal against the deduction of three points for failing to fulfil their fixture against Black-

burn Rovers. Middlesbrough were missing seven first-team players through injury on Saturday, and several more were suffering from a virus. Of those, only Festa, the Italian defender, pulled out, and, although one or two were sick at half-time, they were not as sick as Leicester.

By then Middlesbrough had scored three goals and might have had seven, such was the ease with which Juninho and Emerson scythed through the Leicester defence once Blackmore had been allowed the time and space to beat Poole from 25 yards in the ninth minute. Leicester were without Keller, Walsh and Heskey and were feeling the effects of their two-hour slog against Wimbledon on Tuesday night — but Middlesbrough had endured their own ordeal against Stockport County the



Juninho: hat-trick chance

next evening, and some of their football was simply breathtaking.

Juninho should have had a hat-trick, but had to settle for one goal, in the 26th minute, when Emerson's wonderful pass enabled him to race clear and skip past Poole before putting the ball home.

Juninho then set up Beck to score emphatically in the 35th minute.

The rest was academic. Leicester gave themselves a glimmer of hope when Marshall headed in from Grayson's cross two minutes into the second half, and, with Grayson getting closer to Juninho than anyone had done before, Middlesbrough were never quite the same. However, their defence held out comfortably enough.

Nobody was more relieved than Schwarzer, their impressive Australian goalkeeper recently signed from Bradford City. He was with Kaiserslautern last season when they won the German Cup but were relegated from the Bundesliga. "People said we were too good to go down," he said, "but we did. I'm just hoping that lightning does not strike twice."

LEICESTER CITY (3-5-2): K Poole — J Watts, M Elliot, S Prior, S Grayson, N Larnon, G Parlane, M Izuel, S Guppy — I Marshall, S Clough (sub: M Roberts, 80min).
MIDDLESBROUGH (4-3-2-1): M Schwarzer — M Cox, N Pearson, S Viskari, C Fleming — C Higgins, Emerson (sub: A Moore, 90), C Blackmore — Juninho, M Beck — F Rensell.
Referee: S Lodge.

A18

Olympic triumph nine years ago paves way for growth of sport

Hockey hopefuls seize chance as clubs open doors

THE growing development in school sport in recent years has been the close involvement of clubs. In many activities, clubs now provide the facilities, coaching and, most important of all, the higher standards to encourage youngsters to fulfil their potential.

Hockey is typical. Many of the schoolboys taking part in the under-16 and under-18 teams are now playing for clubs. The Centenary Club at Milton Keynes during the past three days, have attended sessions at leading clubs. This helps to improve their skills and offers a pathway to the adult game.

As Martin Rodgers, the coach to the England under-18 team, said: "After the boom of the 1988 Olympic success, a lot of clubs began junior sections. This meant that we have had more players who were not from independent schools. In addition, some boys have been playing hockey at both schools and clubs."

Three members of the England under-16 team who took the title yesterday with three wins and a goal difference of 7-4, practice at Beeston in Nottinghamshire and also at their schools. However, few schools play hockey during the winter terms and so the boys attend club sessions regularly.

Andrew West, the England captain and central midfielder, is at Rugby, where, naturally, the sport that the school invented, dominates the first winter term. West's mother takes him to Beeston once a week for hockey practice. This term, hockey is a sport option at Rugby so this move is not necessary.



West captains the under-16 school A team from scrum half, and says: "All my mates are in the rugby team. However, I think I should concentrate on hockey if I am to go any further." In which case, he will attend more club sessions next winter.

West certainly demonstrated rare talent yesterday in a tournament that 20 years ago produced Richard Dodds, Sean Kerly and Richard Leaman, all members of the 1988 Olympic gold medal team. Graham Burgess, the England under-16 coach since 1989, said of West: "He leads by example. He is a superb distributor of the ball."

West will lead England into **Haberdashers' triumph outright**

HABERDASHERS' Aske's, Elstree, won the national schoolgirls lacrosse championship outright after sharing the title for three years when they beat St Helen's School, Northwood, 3-1 in the final at Milton Keynes on Saturday. Queen Anne's, Caversham, who shared the title last year, pressed them in the semi-final, losing 1-0 in extra time.

the Six Nations Tournament in Cologne on March 26. England last year finished third to Holland and Germany, only losing first place on goal difference.

Burgess, who teaches at Bablake School, Coventry, believes this team is better than last year's squad and it easily defeated Germany last October. "However, often when you think you have caught up with Germany or Holland, the goalposts have moved again," he said. "They are so good in individual skills. However, they also envy our spirit; it is the one thing they wish they had."

He was pleased with the passing in this tournament. "We ran some beautiful patterns up front. Simon Lanyon is so determined to score goals and Phillip Sully is so subtle." Sully, of West Bridgford, also attends the Beeston club, while Lanyon, who scored a hat-trick against Ireland in the 6-3 victory yesterday, plays for the ISCA club in Devon while attending Exeter school.

Rodgers correctly forecast the difficulties of the under-18s' final game against Ireland. "They often 'function' their way through the first two games but against England they make it a World Cup final. It's their big game of the year whereas we always have the Six Nations Tournament afterwards."

Ireland had a 1-0 half-time lead, but goals from Jon Bleby, another ISCA player, put England ahead. Ireland equalised through Gary McKee only for England to make sure of the title when a superb solo dribble by Peter Wiles, using his reverse stick, allowed Paul Wicken to score.



Young hopefuls: action from the England v Ireland under-16 match

Clubs fail to take stock of Bosman ruling

The initial shock of the Bosman ruling, which permits out-of-contract footballers to move on free transfers across the European Union (EU), has abated. At the time, in December 1995, some doom-mongers predicted a collapse of large parts of the game as the smaller clubs became deprived of transfer fees, often the mainstay of their income, but most clubs are continuing to prosper, in the post-Bosman age.

The City, however, is taking a second look at the Bosman ruling, and is not quite so convinced that all the problems created by the case have been resolved.

The share prices of the quoted football clubs have fallen away in the past few months and only partly from a natural waning of buying enthusiasm after the arrival of new clubs on the market. Concerns over potential earnings from television and the impact of Bosman on costs and income at the clubs have added to the cloud over the market.

It is still probably three years before the British game truly gets to grips with the Bosman judgment. The Football Association is not expected to implement its plan to introduce freedom of movement within the domestic market for out-of-contract players who are over the age of 24 until 1998. The City is nervous about the consequences of this latest change and there will still remain the danger that another player might seek to invalidate the new regulations in the courts.

The immediate impact of the Bosman ruling has been the influx of foreign players. Although not all the players have arrived as free agents, there has been a distinct shift in the cost of players, away from transfer fees and towards higher wages.

What is worrying the City is that wage inflation may get out of hand and costs at the clubs soar out of control. Some experts have predicted that a decline in transfer fees will compensate for the rise in wages, and that overall costs will not change, but Alan Sugar, the chairman of Tottenham Hotspur, is more sceptical, warning that clubs are allowing wages and transfer fees to rise so steeply that, even when the new contract regulations are fully enforced, the clubs will face a higher cost base.

The second Bosman-related issue that has been worrying the City is the practice of adding the value of players to club's balance sheets. Players, who the accountants describe as "intangible assets", are clearly as important to the value of the club as other assets, such as the club's stadium.

Including the playing squad on the balance sheet has the potential of improving a club's financial position in two important ways. It strengthens the company's balance sheet and could lead to an increase in the perception of a club's value, and consequently its share price. City analysts use a variety of methods to assess a company's value, but comparing the total value of the club's assets to its share price is one of the most important.

Second, clubs could increase their borrowing levels by using the players' value as security against some of the loan.

Around 15 clubs at present include players on the balance sheet and the number seems to be increasing, but there is confusion, increased by the Bosman ruling, over exactly how players should be valued on the balance sheet. Clubs could simply employ the value of the transfer fees they paid for the players. Alternatively, they could try to make their own judgments on a player's value, based on the state of the transfer market, the player's age and contract. Even accountants are undecided on which method is most appropriate and it looks as though it will be a number of years before football finds a standard method.

However, Tottenham and Celtic have already decided that the Bosman ruling seriously reduces the value of players on their balance sheets. Tottenham knocked £7.3 million off its balance sheet in its last set of results, effectively halving its reported profits, while Celtic wrote off £2.2 million.

Football is new to the stock market and the City is still unsure of quite how to value the clubs that have floated. The Bosman ruling is clouding the issue further and, until the full effects become clear in a few years, football stocks are likely to face a bumpy ride.

who the accountants describe as "intangible assets", are clearly as important to the value of the club as other assets, such as the club's stadium.

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ALASDAIR MURRAY



St. Patrick's.



Mine.



Bass BRITAIN'S BEST SELLING PREMIUM HAND PULLED ALE SINCE 1777.

SPEEDWAY

Bellevue attracts big names

BY TONY HOARE

JOHN PERRIN, the Bellevue promoter, says that 1997 will be a make-or-break season for the famous Manchester club after a spending spree attracted the signings of Billy Hamill, the world champion, and Sam Ermolenko, the champion in 1993.

The Aces, who have raced at Bellevue greyhound stadium since the demolition of their hallowed Hyde Road home in 1988, have gambled on an increase in attendances, which have been dwindling during the past couple of years.

"We have put a very good team together and, if the fans don't support speedway here this year, they will need a lower level of racing," Perrin said yesterday. "I don't want to promote at a lower level, so someone else will probably have to do it."

Perrin also wants some silverware for Aces' trophy cabinet, which has had no new additions since the 1993 first division championship. "The team has been put together to win something this season and I will be very disappointed if we don't," he said.

Chris Manchester, the No 1 in 1996, who has dropped down with the arrival of Hamill and Ermolenko, is predicting success. "If we all play our part, and there is nothing to say that we cannot, we will slaughter everybody," he said. "I don't think there is a team that will come close to us."

King's Lynn, the East Anglian club, has its sights set on more pressing matters this week as it struggles to open its doors in time for the season. Keith Chapman, the Lynn promoter, last week finalised negotiations to buy the club's Saddlebow Road home, which was unused last year after the club went into receivership at the end of 1995.

Chapman faces a race against time to win a health and safety certificate for the ground before their season begins on April 9.

In an effort to end the club's run of bad luck, Chapman has switched racing night to Wednesday. He also has changed the team's name to the Knights and introduced new riding colours.

The season started brightly for Coventry on Saturday. A large home crowd watched a 51-45 win over Swindon in their opening group match of the Speedway Star Cup.

Photograph, page 39

NETBALL

Youngsters put faith in court action

BY A CORRESPONDENT

WO miles separate the Girls' Model and Our Lady of Mercy schools in north Belfast, but in some respects they could be in different continents. One is Protestant and the other Catholic. Against this sectarian divide, the schools have attempted to forge sporting links, using netball as a prime means of unification.

A setback occurred last September when paramilitaries threatened to burn down the jointly local Ballysillan leisure centre if it was used by Catholic schools including Our Lady, but the schools continued to compete on each other's netball courts.

"We have always tried not to let the troubles interfere," Kate Vine, a PE teacher at the Model, said. "We are using sport as a hope for the future. We are bringing together two populations that are normally part to give them a chance to have fun together."

This ecumenical initiative is being championed by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland, which has devised a programme whereby girls' schools can select a sport and thanks to Sports Council experts, achieve proficiency. Netball proves a particularly popular choice.

Eamonn McCartney, the chief executive of the Sports Council, said: "Most young people in Northern Ireland want to play sport, but the structures do not exist to enable those other than the most talented to do so."

At grass-roots level, links with local primary schools are being fostered and, significantly, children from Catholic primary schools are going to the Protestant Model for extra-curricular netball.

While encouraged by "friendly" games, Irvine remains cautious. Just four years ago inter-school netball was temporarily suspended. "There have been times when fear intruded," she said. "After the Shankill bombing in 1993, parents were afraid to let their children out."

Irvine liaises closely with Noreen McGreevy, her counterpart at Our Lady, a respected coach and umpire who officiated during the recent series between England and Trinidad and Tobago.

"Noreen and I see each other regularly," Irvine said, "and some of the girls who have played netball against each other are now socialising together. Considering the obstacles, that is something."

Bad memories return in waves

WE are now, without doubt, back to the Southern Ocean with a vengeance. Having had a couple of warm, sunny days sailing out of Sydney, Concert continued to head south towards the colder climes, only to find a windless hole. This was not what we have come to expect of these latitudes and it well and truly messed up our position on this fourth leg of the BT Global Challenge. However, the wind is back now and we are in the middle of our third gale, slowly working our way towards the front of the fleet.

The third storm is proving more lively than the other two. The waves are some of the biggest we have seen — huge rolling cliffs picking up the boat in one of two ways. If the helmsman gets it right, it is a lovely gliding motion over the crest, like the best of roller-coaster rides.

If, however, the wave cannot be seen, or is at the wrong angle, Concert is left suspended in mid-air until she comes to rest with a sickening thud on the other side. Anything that is not tied down in the galley usually takes off when the boat lands.

I am writing this during a slack period on one of my days as "care bear". On most yachts this is described as "another watch", but this was not acceptable to the more politically correct among Concert's crew. A day as "care bear" comes round about once a week and consists of cooking and cleaning for the rest of the crew.

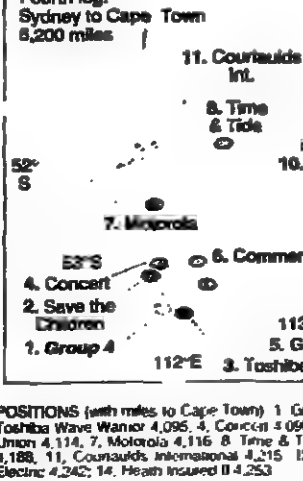
Care bears and sore heads add to the challenge confronting Lucy Duncan



This is straightforward enough until you add a continually moving galley and food that you are more likely to end up wearing than serving. There are also various unguided missiles to dodge, usually packets of food that are not stored as securely as they might be. The sea temperature can be gauged by how numb your fingers feel at the end of the washing up.

There is a fine art to being a "care bear". The timing of meals is vital. If you wake the off-watch team too early and the meal is not ready, you may find your fellow crew members sitting stony-faced, mourning their lost five minutes of sleep, while you get flustered trying to pretend that everything is ready.

Too late is even worse as people pointedly refuse much-wanted second helpings because of the lack of time before going on deck. What is worse is that you find yourself, the next day, submitting



POSITIONS (in miles to Cape Town): 1. Group 4, 2. Save The Children 4.082, 3. Toshiba Wave Warrior 4.095, 4. Concert 4.098, 5. Global Teamwork 4.110, 6. Commercial Union 4.114, 7. Motorola 4.116, 8. Time & Tide 4.160, 9. Ocean Power 4.177, 10. 3Com 4.188, 11. CompuLink International 4.215, 12. Parvix To Remember 4.252, 13. Nuclear Electric 4.242, 14. Heath Insurance 4.253

CYCLING

A labour of love for victorious Boardman

CHRIS BOARDMAN'S return to his first British love — time-trials — ended yesterday as it should have done, when he won the Porthole grand prix, a race against the clock around Lake Windermere (Peter Bryant writes). His victory highlighted the difference in standards between an established Continental professional and the dedicated enthusiasm of the home-based rider.

Boardman used the event almost as a training ride, before his return to France later this week to defend his 1996 success in the French two-day Critérium International. That is not to suggest that the Windermere trial was not important to him; it was, if only to give an indication of his progress in a steady build-up for the Tour de France.

when he is expected to be the Can team leader.

He started yesterday last man off in the 120-entry on a course that had been shortened from its customary 25.5 miles to 21.2 miles because of the introduction of a set of traffic lights. His winning time of 45min 02sec set a record for the course and established a clear margin of 2min 59sec over Stuart Dangerfield, of Wolverhampton, who, with five miles to go, pulled back a deficit of five seconds on Gethin Butler to finish second.

Laurent Jalabert, of France, repeated last year's victory when he won the Paris-Nice race yesterday by one minute from Laurent Dufaux, of Switzerland, although finishing seventh in the final 19.5km time trial stage.

BOWLS

New blood provides England inspiration

AFTER England's success last week in the men's home international series at Ballymoney, there are high hopes of an England double this week, at the women's British Isles championships and team series in Perth (David Rhys Jones writes).

Peter Brimble, the England team manager, has been explaining how his team prized the Hilton Trophy from Scotland's grasp after Scotland had dominated the British bowls scene for six years.

"We made several changes, introducing five newcomers, and recalling Gary R. Smith to take John Bell's place at skip," Brimble said. "We also broke with tradition to appoint a team captain on the green, and Tony Allcock responded magnificently."

Allcock, the world outdoor

singles champion, who has appeared stale in previous series, seemed revitalised by a double challenge: as captain, he had to inspire a side accustomed to failure; as skip, he had to encourage three young men who were making their international debuts.

Brimble's brand of aggressive management, criticised recently by the deposed Bell, was tempered by Allcock's more egalitarian approach.

The result? England won the title for the first time since 1990, and conferred upon Scotland the wooden spoon — a bonus that brought a mischievous glint to Brimble's eye.

Tomorrow, at Perth, England's women launch the defence of the team title, but first, the champions of the four home countries compete today for the four British titles.

Cornishman's historic victory to be relived 100 years on

Fitzsimmons still proving good box office

Roy Lipscombe on ancient American footage that is likely to provoke a bout of British nostalgia

Extraordinary film from the United States of the battle that made Bob Fitzsimmons Great Britain's first world heavyweight boxing champion 100 years ago today will be shown again in London for the first time this century to celebrate the historic victory.

The Cornishman triumphed over "Gentleman Jim" Corbett in Carson City, Nevada, on March 17, 1897, felling the former title-holder with his speciality, a withering blow to the solar plexus. The fourteenth-round knockout was recorded by the newly-invented movie camera, making Fitzsimmons a hero with many thousands of cinema patrons on both sides of the Atlantic.

Now the complete film will be seen again in England for the first time since its 19th-century premiere. The British Film Institute (BFI) is to screen it at the National Film Theatre on June 12 as part of an historic boxing evening.

Clyde Jeavons, of the BFI, said: "Unfortunately we could not arrange a March date to coincide with the actual event. However, it was a tremendous achievement by Fitzsimmons that should be celebrated. He made himself the world's first sporting film star in the process of taking the title."

The footage of the Fitzsimmons-Corbett fight was first shown by the Veriscope Company in New York on May 22, 1897. Shot on a trio of cameras, it had taken two months to process the film and build projection equipment. An announcer stood beside the screen providing a commentary. The film played to packed houses in Boston and Chicago for several weeks before being shown to an excited audience in London for the first time on September 27. By this time modifications had been made to improve the quality. Boxing promoters had also been quick to seize on the financial possibilities heralded by the flickering images.

A precious copy of the 1897 film is now owned by Bill Cayton, the president of Big Fight Inc in the United States and former joint manager of Mike Tyson. He and his then partner, the late Jim Jacobs, had

obtained it from an American boxing enthusiast. He has made it available to the BFI, where experts have helped in the painstaking process of restoring it to transmission quality.

"It was a difficult job getting the film back into shape," Cayton said. "It was just like trying to piece confetti together, but it was such an important event in boxing history that I felt it worthwhile."

A century after the bout Fitzsimmons remains the only Englishman to win the undisputed heavyweight title of the world. The last of a dozen children born to a Cornish mother and an Irish father in Helston, his family left for New Zealand when he was nine.

Weighing only 11st 3lb and standing a fraction under six feet, Fitzsimmons was the lightest man to take the

'He made himself the world's first sporting film star'

championship, yet the chest and shoulders of a blacksmith, balanced on sparrow-thin legs, made him a formidable foe.

With his stunning red hair and freckles, "Ruby Bob" combined a numbing wallop with the ability to absorb brutal punishment. He had been close to defeat

from Corbett's skilful early onslaught before stepping in with his lethal reply.

He had learnt his rugged trade first as a teenager in New Zealand, then at Iron Pot, a ramshackle Sydney arena. Failing to impress in Australia, he left in 1890 for the United States, where he quickly won the world middleweight championship from "Nonpareil" Jack Dempsey.

Keeping bigger company thereafter, by 1896 he had taught a lesson to so many true heavyweights, that he was matched with Peter Maher, an Irishman, for the vacant world championship. Corbett, however, relinquished the title in disgust when all attempts to find a suitable location for a meeting with Fitzsimmons failed. Arrangements were made to film the event in Langtry, Texas, but Fitzsimmons finished his run inside a round before the camera could roll.

Two years after beating the returning Corbett, Fitzsimmons defended his title against the giant James J. Jeffries at Coney Island. Jeffries



Fitzsimmons, the lightest man to win the heavyweight title, had the build of a blacksmith and was a formidable foe

won in 11 rounds, a feat he repeated when they met again in 1902. However, the Cornishman was still to win a third world championship, taking the newly created light-heavyweight title from George Gardner on points over 20 rounds when aged 40.

Although subsequently beaten for that title, Fitzsimmons was never challenged for his middleweight championship. He was still earning a living with his fists when well past 50 at the start of the Great War, a meeting with Jersey Belle at Bethlehem being his last recorded contest. Four times married, Fitzsimmons

died of pneumonia in Chicago on October 22, 1917, aged 54. He is buried in the Graceland cemetery, close to Jack Johnson, another world heavyweight champion. The pair met in the ring in 1907 when the young American quickly flattened the fading Fitzsimmons.

Those who see the ancient film of his finest performance that March day so long ago should learn much about the Cornishman's fighting spirit. The prizefighter said to have coined the phrase "the bigger they come, the harder they fall" had so often proved his point when the gloves were on.

Cricket must come to market

From Mr Richard Cohen

Sir, Cricket must go "public" and start with all county members becoming shareholders of a properly run and financially disciplined business. After decades of physical performances on and off the field, it is high time that proven leisure companies ran the show. What price, say, Granada or Manchester United taking over Lancashire County Cricket Club?

All those superfluous county chairmen, bloated committees, multiplying executives, and half the players would have to go. There is nothing to be gained by tinkering around with the present system, hoping for yet another "saviour" or "motivator" whose real talents have more in common

with the music halls than cricket. It is these very people who have made such a telling contribution to the decline.

No more sinecures and jobs for the boys, and an end to the incestuous nature of most cricketing appointments. The apron string with Lord's must be cut and a national cricket ground built by the new brooms. Let us see 60,000 spectators at a tanner a time! We know, however, that the money from television, the lottery or grants will be frittered away to keep the old bankrupt system and the grey train on the rails.

Yours etc,
RICHARD COHEN,
Havilland Hill House,
Les Hubbs de Haut,
St Martins, Guernsey.

Padding problem

From Mr Alistair Bruten

Sir, During the last two Rugby Lions matches I have watched, the game has been interrupted by the referee telling an opponent to remove his T-shirt with its integral shoulder padding. An England player received the same instruction during the game against France.

When Mark Maplet played the last 20 minutes of the England A international against France the previous night, he took the field with shoulders anyone in *Dynasty* would have died for.

I understand the players' concern for their well-being and expect that is foremost in their minds rather than the equation of missed matches meaning forfeited win bonuses.

I hope that referees can remove this interruption to the game by mentioning it in their pre-match visits to the dressing-rooms. Certainly there is

no excuse for 29 players and the crowd to wait while the player adjusts his dress; let them stay off until the next time the ball is out of play.

The players know that this additional protection is not allowed: Rugby Lions display a big poster in the dressing-room area explaining that the RFU allows scrum caps and just about nothing else, and no doubt other clubs received this poster.

Extra protection must increase the risk of players damaging themselves, and others if they feel they are more immune to injury. If more padding is allowed, the game will be moving along the path towards the crash-helmeted Dunlopillo man and the admiration of the spectator for the sheer bravery of rugby players will be sadly diminished.

Yours faithfully,
ALISTAIR BRUTEN,
29 Lake Crescent,
Daventry, Northamptonshire.

Rowell's regret

From Mr Michael Gould

Sir, In opting for Rob Andrew's recall to the England squad for the international at Cardiff, Jack Rowell must surely have regretted not giving Alex King a chance in the three pre-Christmas matches.

Not only might England have beaten New Zealand Barbarians, but Rowell would have had some indication of

whether King was ready for five nations' rugby. Does he need to be reminded how Mike Carr played in the three matches and that the use of King as a substitute on tactical grounds would have been more than justified?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL GOULD,
2 High Street,
Midsomer Norton,
Bath, Avon.

Well offside

From Mr Edward Grayson

Sir, Alasdair Murray (The Business of Sport, March 10) was yards offside of the facts when he wrote: "Sport is finding dealing with the courts especially tough." For more than a century courts have responded readily to anyone seeking or requiring remedies in the areas covered by sport itself.

The first traceable personal injuries award for sports-related injuries followed a collapsed grandstand at Cheltenham Race Week in 1866. It reached the courts in 1870 as *Francis v Cockrell* and was decided in line with principles developed progressively down the years.

Eight years later, in the first traceable criminal prosecution for a football field fatality, Lord Justice Bramwell in *Regina v Bradshaw* defined the criteria of deliberate and/or reckless misconduct, whether

within or without the field of play, which have stood the test of time.

Bosman's European Court of Justice judgment in 1995 coincided in principle with George Eastham's High Court triumph in 1965, a year which initiated an earlier conspiracy corruption football court case, and countless court decisions have overturned governing bodies' denials of natural justice in the manner Mrs Justice Ebsworth could not avoid deciding against the Welsh Rugby Union earlier this month.

These are all merely sample illustrations of a wider historical tapestry in which the courts have had no problems when invoked with appropriate evidence and correct procedures.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
EDWARD GRAYSON,
President, British Association for Sport and Law,
9-12 Bell Yard, WC2.

greatest players, Wilf Mannion.

Dr Mannion (thanks to Teesside University), the first freeman of Redcar, remains a legend in his own lifetime and is a revered visitor to the Riverside Stadium.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD CURRY,
77 North Street,
Ripon, North Yorkshire.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

COMPANY NOTICES

UNITED CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANY
Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the United Central Railway Company will be held at the Victoria Rooms, 111, Strand, London WC2R 2PH, on Wednesday, 27th March 1997, at 10.00 a.m. The business to be transacted at the meeting is as follows: (a) to receive and adopt the accounts and balance sheet for the year ended 31st December 1996; (b) to elect directors and auditors for the year 1997; (c) to transact any other business that may come before the meeting.

LEGAL NOTICES

SIGNIFY LTD
(Company)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 90 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Latham & Co., 10, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF, on Wednesday, 27th March 1997, at 10.00 a.m. for the purpose of considering the proposed arrangement for the reconstruction of the company.

LEGAL NOTICES

THE GOVERNOR OF 1997
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 14th day of February 1997 is the day appointed for the presentation of the accounts of the company to the creditors of the company for the purpose of the reconstruction of the company.

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

North on the hand today was Ron von der Porten, the American expert. He received looks of scorn from West when he put down the dummy, but I think his bidding was correct.

Dealer South Game all Rubber bridge

♠ A J 10 2
♥ J 9
♦ J 5 2
♣ 7 5 4 2

♠ K 8 4
♥ K 7 4
♦ 10 8 9 3
♣ K 10 6

♠ Q 8 6 3
♥ 7 6 5
♦ Q 7 6 4
♣ Q J 9

♠ 4 7 5
♥ A K 10 6 3 2
♦ A K
♣ A 6 3

♠ 10 9 8 7
♥ 6 5 4 3 2
♦ 10 9 8 7
♣ 10 9 8 7

Contract: Four Hearts by South Lead: Ten of diamonds

Many players make that jump to Three Hearts on inadequate values. After a response at the one level, you need to be a full ace better than a minimum opening bid, in addition to having a good six-card suit. It is clear for North to raise to Four Hearts — both the jack and nine of hearts are likely to be important cards in solidifying South's suit.

Dummy and East played low on the diamond lead and declarer won in hand. At trick two he led a spade and West was caught napping when he played low (according to von der Porten, it was because he was still expending his energy making sneering remarks about his raise — West thought Pass was right). Declarer played the ten from dummy and East won and returned the queen of clubs. Now, how should declarer

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Election fever is well and truly upon us and I plan to continue until the big day (well with a series on world leaders, politicians and international diplomats who have demonstrated chess prowess. Last week I mentioned that Napoleon Bonaparte had tried his hand at chess. Tamburlaine, another would-be world conqueror, was also noted as a player.

Continuing the theme, the games today are a win by an official from the German Embassy in London against Gligoric, the Yugoslav grandmaster, and a victory by Lord Winston from the Lords v Commons match.

White Hans Heinrich Wrede Black Svetozar Gligoric Simultaneous display, Essen, 1941

White: Lord Winston Black: Michael Stern, MP Lords v Commons, March 1997

White: Hans Heinrich Wrede Black: Svetozar Gligoric Simultaneous display, Essen, 1941

White: Lord Winston Black: Michael Stern, MP Lords v Commons, March 1997

White: Hans Heinrich Wrede Black: Svetozar Gligoric Simultaneous display, Essen, 1941

White: Lord Winston Black: Michael Stern, MP Lords v Commons, March 1997

White: Hans Heinrich Wrede Black: Svetozar Gligoric Simultaneous display, Essen, 1941

White: Lord Winston Black: Michael Stern, MP Lords v Commons, March 1997

White: Hans Heinrich Wrede Black: Svetozar Gligoric Simultaneous display, Essen, 1941

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White: Hans Heinrich Wrede Black: Svetozar Gligoric Simultaneous display, Essen, 1941

White: Lord Winston Black: Michael Stern, MP Lords v Commons, March 1997

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

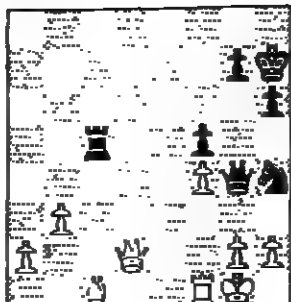
- NEXAL**
a. An armour necklet
b. A throw in wrestling
c. Slavery
- PIASSABA**
a. Coarse fibre
b. Italian trifle
c. A nun's wimple
- NIMMING**
a. Running down
b. Taking bribes
c. An Old English measure
- PALKEE**
a. Litter
b. Rice pudding
c. Pakistani old boy network

Answers on page 45

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Euwe — Keres, world championship, 1948. Although Black is two pawns down, he has tremendously active pieces. How did he now make the most of his chances with a fine combination?



Solution on page 45

The disabled are as skilful at martial arts as the able-bodied, says **Victoria Walker**, who tried her hand at aikido.

Equals on the field of combat

Disability has proved to be no handicap for the students of Terry Taylor's Shotokan karate schools in Kent. Whether partially sighted, blind or confined to a wheelchair, all of his students perform different katas (choreographed set sequences of moves) with convincing poise and determination.

Dorton House, in Seal, Kent, is a school for students who are blind or partially sighted and caters from nursery age through to college education. Every Thursday evening Taylor runs an extra-curricular karate class. There are five boys in his club, aged from 11 to 14.

James Davison has all the awkwardness you would expect of any 14-year-old. Yet, when he performed a solo kata, he spun, kicked and chopped his way through the air with such confidence and grace that he seemed transformed.

The enthusiasm exuded by the group was tangible. "I want to get to black belt in at least one form of martial art," Adam Izzard, 13, said.

Tracy Moses is ten and suffers from spina bifida and hydrocephalus. Despite this, she has been attending karate classes in Chatham, Kent, almost every Monday and Friday since joining the club in November.

Although she can walk unaided, she is learning the directional arm moves of karate katas in her wheelchair. She has to do physiotherapy classes once a week and already karate has helped her to improve her movement dramatically.

Scott Gillis, 13, maintains that karate has had a big impact on the way that he experiences life outside the dojo (karate classroom).

"I am getting better at looking forward rather than down, and keeping my balance," he said.

"If you are really good in some form of martial art, you are always going to feel ready, but, if you are just starting out, do not expect to turn into Bruce Lee or Jean-Claude Van Damme after just a few lessons. It is something you have to work at."

Recognising the benefits that martial arts can provide for people with disabilities, Taylor has founded an annual festival and an informal register.

The latter attempts to place individuals in touch with martial arts teachers in their areas and is achieved through Taylor's wide range of personal contacts throughout the country.

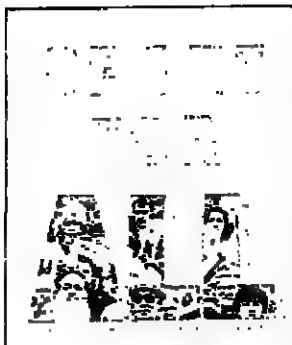
The festival this year will be held on May 15 in Gravesend, Kent. There will be eight disciplines on offer, which the public will be encouraged to sample and observe, with special demonstrations and displays.

Taylor estimates that there will be more than 300 disabled martial arts practitioners and their instructors taking part in the festival.

He enthuses over the benefits gained by anyone who practises any type of martial art.

"It is not only a wonderful way to keep fit, but it teaches valuable self-defence techniques, builds self-confidence and provides a whole bunch of new friends to socialise with," he said.

Joel Young, 11, agrees and said: "It is fun and it gives you something to aim for." Michael Miller, 11, has no illusions and said: "It is very difficult at the start." His favourite move is tobi geri — the



flying kick.

Members of Taylor's clubs are part of a growing number of people with disabilities who practise martial arts. Simon Jackson, the Paralympic judo champion, won his third consecutive gold medal last summer in Atlanta.

Lydia Zijdel uses a wheelchair and took up aikido in 1985. She did not look back, taking up karate as a second discipline. In October 1990 she began teaching people with disabilities.

In his book, *Martial Arts for People With Disabilities*, Dirk Robinson maintains that many people living with a disability can match the prowess of any able-bodied person — and even surpass their skill.

At the end of the class at Dorton House, Taylor made all the boys sit crossed-legged on the floor around the room. Those who were partially sighted had to close their eyes. With the stealth of a ninja, Taylor then crept among them tapping them on their heads and shoulders. The object of the exercise was to try to grab him as he tried to make a tap.

Their success rate was impressively high and I realised that I had witnessed a degree of skill that I would be hard-pushed, if ever able, to match.

For more details, contact Terry Taylor at the Horsted Shotokan Karate Association, 6 Bulldog Road, Lordswood, Chatham, Kent, ME5 8SJ (01634 201469).



Menacing: Michael Miller, 11, demonstrates his favourite move — tobi geri, the flying kick — "but it's not at all easy at first," he said.

ORIENTAL MARTIAL ARTS

KARATE means "open hand" and originated in Okinawa. Based on blows delivered by hand, foot or knee. **KUNG FU** is a generic term for Chinese martial arts, originated in northern China and most famously adapted by Bruce Lee. More than 1,000 different types exist today — many in secret.

TAI CHI, full name Tai Chi Chuan, means "grand ultimate fist". Originated in China as a form of Kung Fu with fluid dreamlike movements. **AIKIDO** was founded in Japan in the 1900s and means

"way of harmony". A defensive art where a focused practitioner can redirect an opponent's aggressive force. **JIU-JITSU** is a Japanese martial art meaning the gentle art. Employs arm locks and joint manipulation and regarded by many as a precursor of Judo and Aikido.

JUDO originated in Tokyo and means "gentle way". Developed as a sport based on a system of leverage techniques, throws and holds. **KENDO** translates as "way of the sword" in Japan. Uses heavy, two-handed sword

techniques with bamboo swords called shinai. **SUMO** contestants compete on a 15ft dirt circle and aim to make any part of opponent's body, bar the soles of his feet, touch the ground. **TAEKWON-DO** is unarmed self-defence combat that originated in Korea featuring kicking and punching techniques. **MUAY THAI** is the correct term for Thai kick-boxing. Fighters today wear boxing gloves and are often trained to be complete fighting machines from a young age.

Focused on the 'way of harmony'

Aikido is a defensive art that turns an aggressor's power against himself. **Victoria Walker** reports

I hate fighting. I am not a particularly aggressive person and I shy from confrontation. I was therefore shocked to discover how much I enjoyed the physical contact of my first aikido class.

Aikido is a classical Japanese martial art. In contrast to karate or Chinese kung fu, for example, it is an essentially defensive discipline. Students of aikido are taught how to redirect the force of an attack back against the aggressor, and it is because of this redirection of energy that smaller, weaker people are able to exert control over larger, stronger ones.

There are four main schools of aikido, one of which, Yoshinkan aikido, is taught as part of the basic training of every policeman in Japan. It is also one of the classical martial arts practised by Tokyo's riot squad.

David Rubens teaches Yoshinkan aikido at the Meidokan Dojo, or school, in West Hampstead, London. Before the lesson the class devotes a short period to silent meditation. They then bow and the action begins.

We started with a series of warm-up exercises. These consisted of simple stretches that are common to most active sports, plus a few rolling and moving techniques that are more attuned to the direct needs and moves of martial arts (at this point I attempted my first forward and backward roll since the age of seven). The last of the warm-up exercises were "controls".

These loosen up the tendons in the wrists and get the systems of joints which are usually locked-in to a control position.

In the class that I watched there were 12 students, including three beginners. As Rubens demonstrated the controls at the front of the group, three of the more advanced students ran to the aid of the novices, gently positioning their hands in the correct formation to achieve the best stretch for the control. Such unbidden assistance was an example of the empathy with the needs of others demonstrated by both Rubens and the students.

Rubens demonstrated the first move with a more senior student in front of the entire class. He showed it initially as a fluid whole and then broke it down step-by-step. After several examples, we copied the move alone as if holding on to "shadow" partners. Then came the time to practise with a real body.

At this point, I felt markedly anxious. My male opponent, Nick, was bigger and undoubtedly stronger than me — when I had to grab his wrist I had difficulty in getting a good hold. I thought he looked pretty fierce, too, though in hindsight that may have been my own imagination, for he was gentle and firm and incredibly tolerant of my clumsy attempts.

At first I was the attacker and moved forward to grasp his wrist. Taking hold of the

arm I had grabbed him with. Nick used two basic pivotal movements to knock me off my balance and a kneeling motion to pin me to the floor.

He had made it look so simple that I was initially disappointed when our roles were reversed and I had difficulty in remembering which step followed which. To my horror, I found that I even developed problems in recognising which was my left and which was my right hand.

Yet, when I finally managed to complete the movement, controlling Nick's body and forcing him to the ground, I was exhilarated by a sense of achievement and a curiously calming sense of empowerment. After practising the move several times, we bowed to our partners and sat back while Rubens demonstrated a second move.

As an observer, I was struck by the beauty of the fighting moves. The aikido performed before me was an intractable combination of grace and menace. The carefully choreographed steps were balletic in their poise and precise execution. I felt drawn to the idea of being able to defend myself with grace and power.

People are attracted to aikido for different reasons. Martin Gilbert, 46, has tried many different martial arts and joined this aikido dojo because it is conveniently located close to his home. He pursues it for the exercise, discipline and philosophy it provides.

Lucy Anis, 28, manages a bookshop in north London and took up aikido two years ago. She found it quite by chance, as she was looking for Tai Chi classes. "I went the first time and quite liked it, but, by the time I had been a second time, I loved it and was hooked," she said.



The writer deflects Ali Ganchi in her first aikido class

Ali Ganchi, 18, is a student studying for his A levels. Fascinated by martial arts, he first tried karate, but found that it did not suit him. He now regularly attends a Saturday morning class and has achieved a promising level of skill in a relatively short time. As a father of two children (with a third due very shortly), Rubens recognises the education and fun that children can get out of martial arts. As a result, he offers classes from the age of five.

It is impossible to get Rubens to talk about his own experiences as a student and teacher of aikido without him mentioning his own teacher, Gozo Shioda (who in turn was a student of the founder of aikido, Morihei Ueshiba). He spent five years training directly under Gozo Shioda in the Yoshinkan headquarters school in Tokyo and was one of only six Westerners to become a live-in Shido'in (instructor). Such lineage shows how important tradition is within the discipline.

Japanese martial arts, until just over a century ago, were practised by samurai, the warrior class. Aikido means "way of harmony". Training in aikido differs from that of many other Japanese martial arts in that it has a deep underlying philosophy. The aim of aikido is to unify

STARTING OUT

British Aikido Board. General secretary: Shirley Timms. Write with sse to 6 Halkingcroft, Langley, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 7AT. 01753 819086

Meidokan Yoshinkan Aikido Dojo. David Rubens, Studio One, 187-191 West End Lane, West Hampstead, London. 0171-328 4533

Further reading The official book of the Tokyo Yoshinkan Aikido Federation is published in Britain this month by Kodansha International. £24.00. *Total Aikido: The Master Course*, by Gozo Shioda with Yasuhisa Shioda. Translated from the Japanese by David Rubens. ISBN 4 7700 2058 9

the mind, body and energy of a person. By focusing the energy and the mind and by using the body to work with, rather than against an opponent, harmony is achieved.

This philosophy and the sense of being part of something much bigger is a powerful force in itself. For the past few days, like someone enamoured by a new romance, I have not been able to get aikido off my mind. I have been caught so many times in an apparent daydream as I re-enact moves trying to perfect them in my imagination. I am excited at the prospect of learning a whole new art and suspect that Rubens may not have seen the last of me.

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No discretion in accepting jurisdiction

Pearce v Ove Arup Partnership Ltd and Others

Before Mr Justice Lloyd
[Judgment March 7]

English courts had to accept jurisdiction where an action was brought against an English domiciled defendant, whether with or without other defendants, for breach of a Dutch copyright, the Netherlands being a contracting state to the Convention on Jurisdiction and the Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters, signed at Brussels in 1968 and to hear that action on the merits.

There was no room for the exercise of discretion or the application of the doctrine of forum conveniens.

Mr Justice Lloyd, sitting in the Chancery Division, so held, declining to strike out as non-judicial an action for breach of a Dutch copyright against four defendants, one of which was domiciled in the United Kingdom but striking out the action as regarded both English and Dutch copyright as an abuse of process on the basis that it had no chance of success.

Mr Adrian Speck for the plaintiff, Ms Heather Lawrence for the first defendant, Mr Christopher Floyd QC and Mr Richard Hacon for the second, third and fourth defendants.

MR JUSTICE LLOYD said that the plaintiff complained of

breaches of what he claimed to be his copyright as the author of drawings created by him as an architectural student. The drawings, for a town hall in Docklands, were never built.

He claimed that the second and third defendants, Mr Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture respectively, had access to and took copies of his drawings and used them in substantial part in designing a building, the Kunsthal in Rotterdam.

The first defendant civil engineers, Ove Arup Partnership Ltd, retained for the construction of the building, were domiciled in the United Kingdom. The fourth defendant, the city of Rotterdam, was the owner of the building. The second to fourth defendants applied to strike out the claim as an abuse of process.

The first issue was whether the English court could hear an action for breach of a Dutch copyright against a defendant domiciled in the United Kingdom.

Apart from the effect of the Brussels Convention, an action in England complaining of breach of a foreign copyright would be bound to fail.

There were two reasons: a claim for breach of a foreign statutory intellectual property right was regarded as local and should not be entertained by an English court; see *British South Africa Co v Companhia de Moçambique*

([1893] AC 602; *Def Lepp Music v Stuart-Brown* [1986] RPC 273).

The *Def Lepp Music* case showed that such a claim would also fail because the choice of law rule as regards double actionability would not be satisfied: see rule 203 in *Dicey and Morris, Conflict of Laws* (12th edition) (1993) p487-8. That rule had been abolished by section 10 of the Private International Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1995 with prospective effect as from May 1, 1996.

The Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments Act 1982 gave the Brussels Convention the force of law directly in the United Kingdom. An action for copyright was plainly within the scope of the civil and commercial matters to which the Convention applied: article 1.

The fundamental rule as to jurisdiction was laid down by article 2: a person domiciled in a contracting state was to be sued in the courts of that state. There were exceptions to that principle.

By article 5(3), the action for compensation for infringement of copyright being a matter relating to tort, delict or quasi-delict, could be brought in The Netherlands as the place where the harmful event occurred.

Article 6(1) permitted a person domiciled in a contracting state to be sued where any one of the defendants was domiciled. The first defendant was domiciled in the United Kingdom, so the other

defendants could be sued in England on the basis of article 6(1).

English authorities were against the jurisdiction in the United Kingdom of foreign intellectual property rights: see *Mölnlycke AB v Procter & Gamble Ltd* (No 4) ([1992] RPC 21), *Plastus Kreativ AB v Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Co* ([1995] RPC 438) and *L. A. Gear Inc v Gerald Whelan & Sons Ltd* ([1991] FSR 670).

By contrast courts in The Netherlands and Germany had accepted jurisdiction and granted remedies in respect of infringement of patents in other contracting states.

So far as his Lordship knew, this was the first English case in which the point had been argued. There was a reluctance to accept jurisdiction, for which there might be sound policy reasons, but the court had no discretion, to which policy considerations were relevant: either the case was not justiciable because of the *Mölnlycke* rule or rule 203, or it had to accept jurisdiction because article 2 prevailed.

In so far as the action was based on allegations of the breach of Dutch copyright, it should not be struck out as non-judicial. However, the action should be struck out as an abuse of process on the basis that it had no chance of success.

Solicitors: Sheratte Caley & Co; Berryman; Ashurst Morris Crisp.

In circumstances of increasingly international dealings it might be said to be convenient to be able to sue a person for infringement of intellectual property rights in two or more contracting states by one action in the court of domicile instead of proceeding separately in each relevant jurisdiction.

The Convention did require an English court to accept jurisdiction where an action was brought against an English-domiciled defendant, with or without other defendants, for breach of a Dutch copyright, and to hear that action on the merits, and thus to override, so far as was necessary for that purpose, the *Mölnlycke* rule and rule 203, even though neither was a rule of jurisdiction.

Each of them, to the extent that they would preclude the English court from hearing such an action, would impair the effectiveness of the Convention by frustrating the operation of the basic rule in article 2, and therefore had to give way to allow the jurisdictional rules of the Convention to have their proper effect.

In so far as the action was based on allegations of the breach of Dutch copyright, it should not be struck out as non-judicial. However, the action should be struck out as an abuse of process on the basis that it had no chance of success.

Solicitors: Sheratte Caley & Co; Berryman; Ashurst Morris Crisp.

'Sold' for valuation means transferred property

Jones and Another v Inland Revenue Commissioners

Before Mr Justice Lightman
[Judgment February 14]

For inheritance tax purposes a contract for the sale of the deceased's property which was not completed did not give rise to an eligible claim for relief under section 191 of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984, as renamed by section 100 of the Finance Act 1996.

Although in an appropriate context "sold" could mean "agreed to be sold", in sections 190 to 198 of the 1984 Act, provisions concerned with various aspects of valuation, it had to mean "conveyed or transferred on completion of a sale".

Mr Justice Lightman, on the hearing of an originating summons in the Chancery Division so held, refusing to grant the plaintiffs, the personal representatives of William Robert Jones, deceased, a declaration that the value of his interest in Brook Farm, West Bergholt, Colchester, was not the probate valuation of £477,000 but the sale price of £300,150 agreed by a contract made in June 1991, being within three years of the date of the death.

Section 191 of the 1984 Act provides: "(1) Where—(a) an interest in land is comprised in a person's estate immediately before his death and is sold by the appropriate person within the period of three years immediately following the date of the death... the value for the purposes of this Act of that interest shall... be its sale value..."

Section 198(1) provides: "...the date on which an interest in land is

sold or purchased by the appropriate person shall for the purposes of this Chapter be taken to be the date on which he enters into a contract to sell or purchase it."

Mr David Parry for the plaintiffs; Mr Michael Furness for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE LIGHTMAN said that the plaintiffs claimed that the value of Brook Farm that formed part of the deceased's estate was and remained the sale price agreed by a contract for its sale for £300,150 made in June 1991.

The contract was never completed, the purchaser forfeiting the deposit. The plaintiffs contended that for the purposes of section 191 of the 1984 Act the entry into that contract was a sale.

The Crown contended that what was required was a completed sale, a contract which proved abortive was not such a sale.

His Lordship said the meaning of "sold", like the word "paid", depended on the context: it might mean "agreed to be sold" and it might mean "conveyed or transferred on completion of a sale"; consider per Lord Hoffman in *Charter Reinsurance Co Ltd v Fagan* (The Times May 26, 1996; [1996] 2 WLR 726, 764-765).

In the appropriate context, "sale" might be an appropriate term to denote a contract and the legal consequence of a specifically enforceable contract for the sale of land, and most particularly the vesting in the purchaser of the full equitable title, albeit subject to the vendor's rights under the contract including his "unpaid vendor's lien". At issue was whether that

was an appropriate context. Part VI of the Act was concerned with various aspects of valuation.

Although the provisions extended to sales made for any reason during the statutory period, extended by section 194(1) of the Finance Act 1993 from three to four years for persons dying after March 16, 1993, the provisions were particularly directed to providing relief for persons who were compelled to sell in order to pay the inheritance tax attributable to the value of the interest sold.

Where there was a fall in the value of the interest sold because of a change in market conditions between the death and the sale, it might be unjust and unfair in requiring tax to be paid on the higher value at death rather than the value at the date of sale and the moneys received on sale.

But the focus in sections 190 to 198 of the Act was on the interest sold. A sale was the precondition to any relief.

Under the 1991 contract the interest agreed to be sold was the legal freehold which was to pass on completion. The 1991 contract, because it was specifically enforceable, passed the equitable freehold title.

The question raised was whether the sale contemplated by section 191 was of the legal title on completion or of the equitable title on execution of the contract. In the context of sections 190 to 198 it was clear beyond question that "sold" meant "conveyed or transferred on completion of a sale".

Solicitors: Ellison & Co, Colchester; Solicitor of Inland Revenue.

Automatic timetable ceases on stay of proceedings

Whitehead v Avon County Council

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Thorpe and Lord Justice Waller
[Judgment February 10]

The automatic directions for the timing of proceedings under Order 17, rule 11 of the County Court Rules (SI 1981 No 1687/L23) ceased to apply if an action was stayed. However, a court should always consider whether it was appropriate to impose its own time limits to such an action.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by the defendant, Avon County Council, against the de-

cision of Judge Battenbury at Bath County Court on March 24, 1995 that the personal injury action of the plaintiff, Cynthia Whitehead, had not been automatically struck out by virtue of the automatic directions under Order 17, rule 11 of the 1981 Rules.

On September 6, 1993 the action was stayed "pending the examination of the plaintiff by [Dr X] and pending the provision by the plaintiff of a suitable form of authority enabling [Dr X] to have full access to the whole of the plaintiff's general medical records."

Mr Andrew Collender QC and Mr Christopher J. Russell for the defendant; Mr Edwin Glasgow,

QC and Mr Peter Langlois for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE WALLER said that the difficult question raised on the appeal related to the effect of an order staying proceedings on the automatic directions laid down by Order 17, rule 11. In particular, whether the automatic strike out under rule 11(6) occurred despite there being in place an order for a stay as at the "quillotine date" that is, the date 15 months after the close of pleadings or nine months after the date fixed by the court for requesting a hearing date.

In construing the rules his Lordship bore in mind that their aim was to take matters out of the hands of the parties so far as

timetabling was concerned. But as *Downer & Downer Ltd v Brought* (The Times January 19, 1996; [1996] 1 WLR 575) showed: (a) if orders were inconsistent with the automatic directions those directions might well cease to have effect, and (b) the aim of the rules could also be achieved by the court itself making appropriate orders.

There was no reason why a court should not make an order about which there could be no argument. In a case such as the present an order could have been made "staying the action pending examination by Dr X, that examination to take place by (a) date, and the plaintiff to be entitled to apply by (a further date) to fix a date for trial from which date the nine-month period shall run under Order 17, rule 11(6)".

Certainly if an order were in the above form his Lordship could see no objection on the basis of a stay having been ordered, to a plaintiff being entitled to apply to extend the periods of time if he could show reasonable grounds for doing so; for example, if an appointment could not in fact be fixed by the date chosen, or pending an appeal or whatever. The imposition of a stay certainly could not prevent an application to extend the time set by the very order imposing the stay.

However, if the court itself made an order staying proceedings without words in the order preserving a

date by which the plaintiff was obliged and able to request a hearing, an order for a stay was inconsistent with the automatic directions.

The inconsistency seemed to be clear in that the stay prevented the plaintiff, or either party, taking any of the steps under paragraph (3) which they would otherwise be bound to take for at least some period. It followed that the automatic directions ceased to apply and paragraph (3), the automatic strike-out provision, must also cease to apply.

The defendant had stressed that if the automatic directions did not apply in a case where a stay had been imposed on a plaintiff in default, that seemed to place that plaintiff in a more favourable position than a plaintiff who was not in default.

The answer to that was twofold. First, by seeking a stay, a defendant was in fact seeking to use the inherent jurisdiction of the court, recognised by rule 11(4)(a), which would include powers to impose time limits or "unless" orders.

Since to obtain a stay the defendant would go before the court, it lay within the defendant's power to seek an order worded so as to retain an automatic strike out, or some other order impacting on the plaintiff in default.

Of equal importance, it also lay within the court's own power to impose conditions that had that effect. Consistent with the aim of the rules themselves, consideration should always be given by a court ordering a stay as to whether the case was not one suitable for insertion of a timetable along the lines suggested above expressly preserving paragraph 19, as applying by reference to a date for requesting the fixing of a trial. If the defendant obtained such an order, the plaintiff in default would have none of the advantages suggested.

The Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Thorpe agreed.

Solicitors: Bennett Metcalfe, Bristol; Faulkners, Frome.

Challenging contract conditions

Sheffield v Pickfords Ltd and Another

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Thorpe and Sir Ralph Gibson
[Judgment February 11]

A plaintiff who wished to challenge the reasonableness of standard conditions in a contract relied on by a defendant to exclude liability did not have to raise the issue in the pleadings.

Where defendants were intending to rely on such standard conditions the better practice would be for them to include in their defence a statement that the conditions were reasonable.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Kristina Sheffield, against the decision of Mr Recorder McIntyre at Uxbridge County Court on August 8, 1995 refusing her leave to file a reply so as to plead the unreasonableness of standard conditions relied on by the defendants, Pickfords Ltd and Pickfords Removals Ltd, and giving judgment for the defendants in an action for breach of contract and negligence.

Ms Michelle Stevens-Huare for the plaintiff; Ms Naomi Ellenbogen for the defendants.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that the point arising for consideration was one of importance with regard to the proper approach in pleading actions for breach of contract. The issue arose because of the provisions of the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977.

In their defence, the defendants had set out various of their standard provisions on which they said they were entitled to rely, the effect of which was either to exclude liability or to reduce their liability if they were shown otherwise to be liable.

The recorder had held that if there was going to be an issue as to the reasonableness of the conditions raised, then the obligation of the plaintiff was to make that clear in the pleadings.

Once the point was taken then the onus would be upon the defendant to establish that the conditions in question were reasonable.

The plaintiff submitted that

where a pleading made it clear that the defendants were going to rely upon standard conditions, then it was implicit in that pleading that they were saying that those standard conditions were reasonable. Therefore, that then became an issue in the proceedings with the consequence that if no reply was filed, that was a live issue which the defendants had to be prepared to meet at the hearing.

Alternatively, the plaintiff said that there was an obligation on the defendants to set out that the conditions were reasonable so as to make it clear that that was a requirement of the 1977 Act of which they were aware and which they were prepared to fulfil. The requirement of reasonableness was a condition precedent to the reliance upon the standard conditions which were being prayed in aid.

The defendants submitted that it was asking too much of them to draw that matter to the attention of the other party which would amount to an open invitation to take a point that the conditions were not reasonable. It was for the plaintiff to trigger the issue by at least indicating that she was putting the matter in issue.

His Lordship was satisfied that, at the least, where defendants are relying on terms to which the Act applied, there was an implication that the terms were those upon which they were entitled to rely having regard to the provisions of the Act.

Furthermore, his Lordship would go further and say that there were advantages in defendants stating clearly and squarely that they contended that the contract provisions were reasonable.

They could then take the course of requiring the plaintiff to clarify her position, to say whether or not she was taking the point. If she was taking the point, then the defendants were in a position to have the necessary evidence at the hearing to establish the matter.

Lord Justice Thorpe agreed and Sir Ralph Gibson gave a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Aslam Heath; Vaudreys, Manchester.

TOMORROW'S FOOTBALL

Richard Cork looks ahead to the exhibition by German expressionist, George Grosz, at the Royal Academy.

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RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY

Interims: Manganese Bronze, Tay Homes. Finals: Alexon, Argos, Aesc (BSF), ASW Holdings, Bunzl, Drustal, Eclipse Blinds, English China Clay, Goring, Harriman, Gas, Pearson, Spandax, TT Group, Wilson Bowden, Yorkshire Group. Economic statistics: EU finance ministers meeting.

TOMORROW

Interims: Dorling Kindersley Holdings, IAF Group, Paterson Zochonis, Wolseley. Finals: Britannia Assurance, Broadcastle, BSG International, Caledonian, Robey, Charter, Claremont Garments, Dairy Farm International, Delta, FISHER & Sons, Glynned Engineering Holdings, Hardy Oil & Gas, Law Debenture Corp, Loper, Manders, Maybom Group, Meggit, Rixboro Group, Secure Trust Group, TC Group, Wassall, Watmoughs Holdings, Wilson (Connolly). Economic statistics: UK PSBR (February), Italy industrial output (January), US housing starts (February).

WEDNESDAY

Interims: Besser Group, Brit Allcroft, BZW Endowment Fund, Sample Cochrane, Wew Group. Finals: Aegis Group, Bowthorpe, Broadcastle, Cairn Energy, Cantab Pharmaceuticals, Deira, Evans Halshaw Higgs, EW Fact, Eton, Har Fin, Hong Kong Land Higgs, Independent Newspapers, Kingfisher, Mandarin Oriental Higgs, Mayes, Bernard Matthews, Premium Trust, Revam, Television Corporation, Trinity International Higgs, United Carriers Group, Vickers, Wey Group. Economic statistics: UK unemployment (February), UK average earnings and unit wage costs (January), UK retail sales (February), UK minutes of monetary policy meeting held on February 5, US consumer prices index (February).

THURSDAY

Interims: McBride, Finales: Abbott Mead Vickers, Albright & Wilson, Airtel, APV, British Borneo Petroleum, Briton Estate, Burford Holdings, Courtauld Textiles, Dairton Group, Edinburgh Oil & Gas, Foreign & Colonial Investment, Guinness, Jardine Matheson, Jardine Strategic, Keller Group, Kwik-Fit Holdings, Wm Morrison, National Express Group, Queen's Most Houses, Rugby Group, Servisair, Steel Burt Jones, Telspac, TDS Circuits. Economic statistics: UK retail prices index (February), UK motor vehicle production (February), UK provisional M4 money supply (February), UK final M4 money supply (February), UK BSA bank lending to private sector (February), UK BSA building society net lending (February), UK CBI industrial trends survey (March), US trade deficit (January), US weekly jobless claims report.

FRIDAY

Interims: Fortnum & Mason. Finals: Frost Group, Speciality Shops, Waco Group. Economic statistics: none scheduled.

COMPANIES

MICHAEL CLARK



Pearson strategy under scrutiny



Marjorie Scardino of Pearson. The City will want to know more about future policy

PEARSON: Today's full-year figures will be overshadowed by the comments of Marjorie Scardino, the new chief executive, who makes her first appearance in the Square Mile. The City will want to question her closely on the future media strategy for the group, further disposals and even the £100 million hole that has opened up at Penguin Publishing in New York as a result of unauthorised discounting.

The results are unlikely to hold many surprises after last month's trading update that accompanied the revelations at Penguin. Pre-tax profits are expected to have grown from £235.7 million to between £242 million and £262 million, with earnings likely to have fallen from 28.6p to 28.0p.

The flurry of acquisitions and disposals during the period, including the purchase of the education publishing interests of HarperCollins for £381 million and the disposal of Westminster Press for £305 million, make it difficult to accurate forecasting. But shareholders should be rewarded with a near 10 per cent increase in the dividend to 18p.

GUINNESS: Brokers are agreed that we should see a flat performance when the drinks group unveils full-year numbers on Thursday. Pre-tax profit estimates are pitched in a narrow band ranging from £950 million to £958 million compared with £940 million. United Distillers will have struggled to make headway as figures at the half-way stage indicated. Flat operating profits of about £570 million are envisaged, with declines in sales in Europe and the US. Japan is also likely to have failed to lived up to expectations. A small increase in earnings, from 32.9p to 33.7p, has been pencilled in, with the payout growing 9 per cent to 16.25p.

ARGOS: There are unlikely to be any surprises in today's full-year figures in the wake of January's shock profits warning. The group has already indicated that the final outcome will be about £140 million, compared with £124.4 million last time, although some estimates are as low as £137

million. Like-for-like sales for the full year are likely to be up 8 per cent, with much of that improvement achieved in the first six months. There is expected to be a small rise in the gross margin, but a shift in costs is likely to depress trading margins.

KINGFISHER: Unlike Argos, the Woolworth, Comet, B&Q and Superdrug chain store is likely to have enjoyed 1996 when it reports full-year numbers on Wednesday. Brokers are looking for pre-tax profits of £380 million, compared with £287 million last

time. Earnings are also likely to show a sharp improvement, with 40.4p pencilled in against 31.6p last time. Last month's Christmas trading statement confirmed that the group was on course for a bumper profits improvement while, at the same time, grabbing market share across the board. B&Q will prove to be a star performer after a number of years in the doldrums. The payout is expected to grow 14 per cent to 18.5p net. But brokers will be anxious about the outlook for the current year. Trading conditions will prove tougher, with the

weakness in the French franc causing concern.

WOLSELEY: Expansion in America, which now accounts for almost half of all group profits, will provide the key to tomorrow's half-year figures from the building products supplier. The recovery in the domestic housing market and the growth in construction output should also prove helpful. The only black spot remains Europe where there is likely to be a further decline in profitability from France. Profit forecasts are pitched at about

£122 million, compared with £111 million last time. A figure of £255 million has been pencilled in for the full year.

VICKERS: Solid performances from its defence and automotive arms will be crucial to full-year figures on Wednesday. If Rolls-Royce Motors has maintained its margins during the second half in the run-up to the launch of a new range of models with BMW engines some time this year, then it will have done well. The defence division should record a small improvement in margin as deliveries of the Challenger 2 tank to the Ministry of Defence continue. The figures are also likely to be marked by a return to profits by the medical side for the first time since 1994. Pre-tax profits will have grown by about £10 million, to £85 million, with earnings almost 9 per cent ahead at 17.1p. An increase in the payout of almost 15 per cent to 7.7p is forecast.

WM MORRISON: Fierce competition in the high street will result in a lacklustre performance from the northern supermarket chain when it unveils full-year figures on Thursday. These should show pre-tax profits up just 4 per cent, from £127.8 million to £132.3 million, with the outlook for the current year likely to be even tougher. The group's performance should be marked by a slowdown in both like-for-like and new store sales, plus an increase in costs of sales. Even so, shareholders are likely to be generously rewarded, with an 18 per cent rise in the payout forecast to 1.63p net.

ALBRIGHT & WILSON: A mixed performance is expected when final figures are reported on Thursday, with any improvement in its specialities and surfactants offset by an erosion of profits at its dominant phosphates operation. Pre-tax profits are likely to come in at £65.5 million, compared with £57.5 million last time, while earnings per share should have grown 11 per cent, from 13.1p to 14.6p. The dividend should be 6 per cent higher, at 6.85p.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

PSBR data to set tone

BRITAIN has a heavy schedule of economic statistics this week, kicking off with February figures for public borrowing tomorrow. The market is expecting a public sector borrowing requirement of £3.9 billion, according to a consensus forecast compiled by MMS International. This compares with the £5.8 billion repayment of borrowing in January, a bumper month for corporation tax.

On Wednesday, the minutes of the monthly monetary meeting held on February 5 are released and will be closely scrutinised for any softening of Bank of England demands for higher base rates. Also on Wednesday, February retail sales figures are released and are expected to show a rise of 0.3 per cent, considerably weaker than the 0.6 per cent increase in January. This would leave sales volumes 3.8 per cent higher than a year ago compared with a year-on-year increase in January of 4.6 per cent.

These figures coincide with the latest labour market data. Unemployment figures for February are expected to show a decline in headline unemployment of 37,500 compared with January's drop of 68,000. Annual growth in average earnings in January is expected to be 4.25 per cent, the same rate as in December.

On Thursday, the retail prices index for February is published. The headline inflation rate is expected to have remained the same as in January at 2.5 per cent while underlying inflation, which the Government aims to get to 2.5 per cent or less, is expected to fall to 2.9 per cent from 3.1 per cent.

February's M4 broad money supply figures are expected to show a rise in annual growth, back to 10 per cent from 9.8 per cent in January. Building society mortgage lending is expected to have risen by about the same as in January. The statistical week ends on Friday with the monthly CBI trends survey.

JANET BUSH

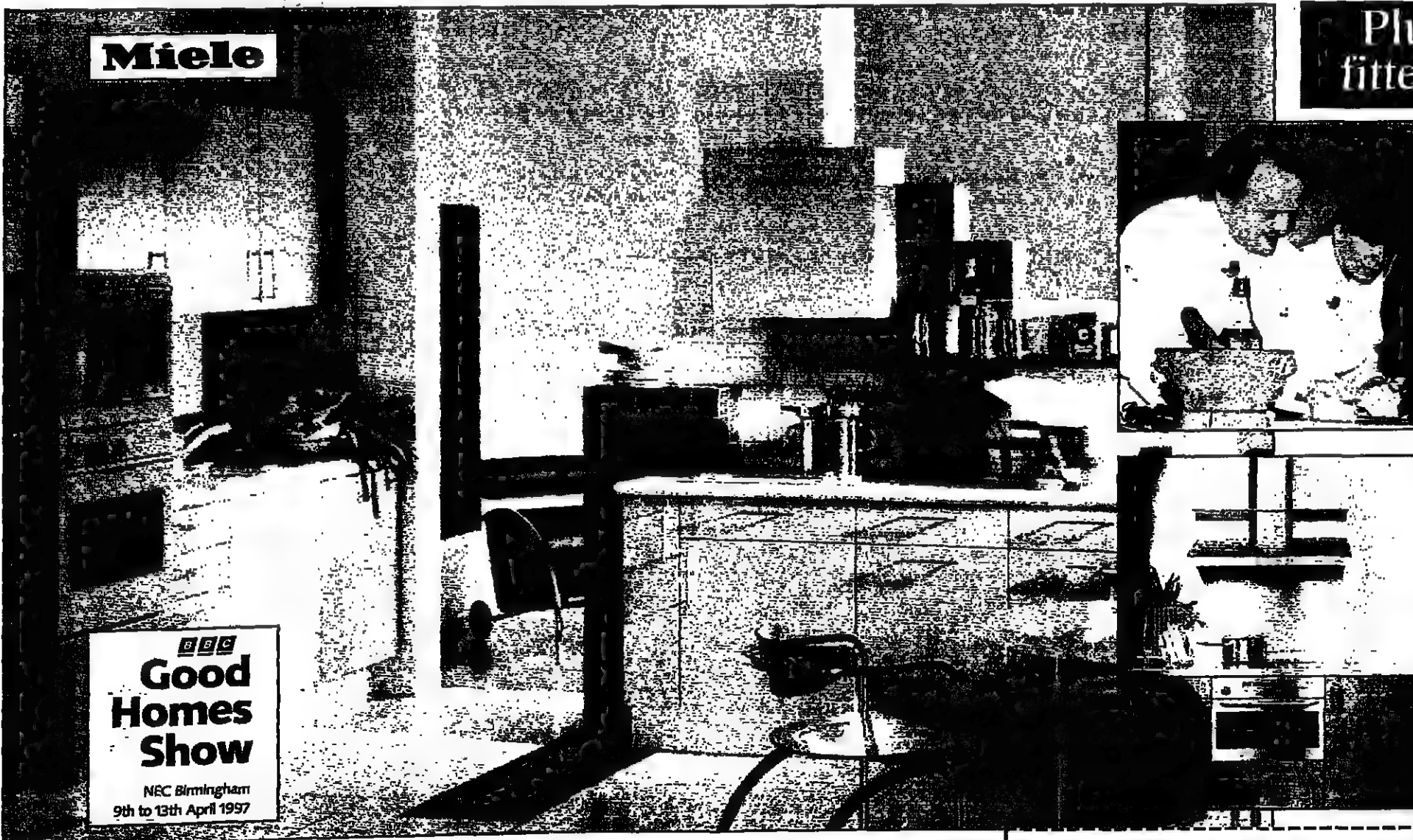
SUNDAY TIPS

The Sunday Telegraph: Buy Argos, Yorkshire Group; Add Surrey Free Inns. The Sunday Times: Buy Flextech, Babcock International, Johnson Group. The Observer: Sell Renokil, Memory Corporation, Scotia Holdings. Independent on Sunday: Sell Shield Diagnostic, BAT Industries; Buy Freepages, The Mail on Sunday; Buy Ryland, IMS Group, Railtrack, Meggit, Pearson, Vickers.

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

THE TIMES

FREE BBC Good Homes Show tickets



Plus a £10,000 Miele fitted kitchen to be won

The Times offers you a FREE ticket, worth at least £7.50, for the first ever BBC Good Homes Show. The event, at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, from Wednesday to Sunday, April 9-13, will be packed with new ideas and advice covering every aspect of home decoration and furnishing. You can view the latest products of more than 150 exhibitors and get tips from experts at live demonstrations and forums.

You can also meet the teams from top BBC shows at the Lloyds Bank Insurance Direct Celebrity Theatre, including Home Front, Antiques Road Show and Changing Rooms Live. They will advise on objects from their fields which can add to your home. Tickets for these sessions cost £4 and can be pre-booked by calling 0121-767 4000.

To get your free show ticket collect three differently numbered tokens from the six appearing this week. Send them with a stamped sae, marked on the front which day you wish to attend, with the form to the address below. You will be entered in a prize draw for a fully-installed Miele kitchen worth £10,000. The kitchen has already been christened at last week's BBC Good Food Show by celebrity chefs Gary Rhodes, Antony Worrall-Thompson, Ainsley Harriott and Raymond Blanc. Plus there are pictures of them in action in the kitchen to be won.

The fully-installed Miele kitchen, as seen at the BBC Good Food Show, has stylish lined-oak fronted kitchen units, metal-framed glass-fronted units and a stainless steel roller shutter unit. The worktop, from Bald, incorporates a stainless steel onset sink with chrome mixer tap. The prize also has a stainless steel Miele single oven, microwave, four-burner gas hob and extractor canopy. For a Miele brochure, call 01235 554488.

THE TIMES
THE BBC
GOOD HOMES
SHOW
TOKEN 1

MORE PRIZES TO WIN THIS WEEK

This week in The Times you could win:

- an iron bed and feather mattress from Adrian Reynolds and the Featherbed Company with bedlinen from Cologne & Cotton
- a cane furniture suite from Kiani UK
- an Advanced Shower System
- Kilim-covered stools from Clockhouse Furniture
- Paint Magic decorating courses.

BBC Good Homes Show hotline 0121-767 4000.

THE TIMES FREE TICKETS TO THE BBC GOOD HOMES SHOW

Attach three differently numbered tokens to this form with a stamped sae, clearly marked on the front which day you wish to attend. Send it to: The Times/BBC Good Homes Show, PO Box 1143, London W3 8EQ. Only one free ticket per sae and three tokens allowed subject to availability.

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other _____ Initials _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Day tel _____

IT WOULD HELP US IF YOU ANSWERED THESE QUESTIONS:

Which one of the following age groups do you fall into? (Please tick box)

☐ 15-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (4-6 copies) each week?

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy occasionally (3 copies or less)?

Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (2-4 copies a month)?

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by The Times, please tick ☐

CHANGING TIMES

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company			Price			Company			Price		
194181 Industrial Tel	819	-	7	25	883	8200 BFI	31	470	-	12	3
194182 SBC Comm	117	-	6	51	194183	194183	31	470	-	12	3
5225 S	124	-	1	13	194184	194184	31	470	-	12	3
23825 SBC Comm	124	-	1	13	194185	194185	31	470	-	12	3
5070 Services NV	1400	-	42	17	194186	194186	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194187	194187	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194188	194188	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194189	194189	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194190	194190	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194191	194191	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194192	194192	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194193	194193	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194194	194194	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194195	194195	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194196	194196	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194197	194197	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194198	194198	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194199	194199	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194200	194200	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194201	194201	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194202	194202	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194203	194203	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194204	194204	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194205	194205	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194206	194206	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194207	194207	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194208	194208	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194209	194209	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194210	194210	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194211	194211	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194212	194212	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194213	194213	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194214	194214	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194215	194215	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194216	194216	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194217	194217	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194218	194218	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194219	194219	31	470	-	12	3
5110 SBC Comm	1400	-	42	17	194220	194220	31	470	-	12	3

Minimum
wage no
threat.
as survey

Minimum wage no threat, says survey

By Philip Bassett
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITAIN'S businesses would be unaffected by a minimum wage set at even £4 an hour, according to a survey published today.

This is higher than the level likely to be recommended by a Labour government. Business leaders have maintained that a minimum wage would be damaging to business.

In the survey, commissioned by Reed Personnel, the recruitment specialist, and covering some 970 firms, 65 per cent of companies said they would be unaffected by a minimum wage of £4, with 35 per cent saying that they would be affected. The survey suggests that firms with below 100 and below 500 employees are actually more likely than larger companies to be unaffected by a £4 minimum.

Labour has said it has no specific figure for the minimum wage, but says instead that a Low Pay Commission, made up from employers and employees, would recommend a rate.

At a minimum of £3.75 an hour, 68 per cent of companies surveyed said they would not be affected. At an hourly rate of £3.50, 76 per cent said they will be unaffected, while at a £3.25 rate as many as 79 per cent of firms said a minimum wage would not damage their business.

Ian McCartney, Labour's Chief Employment Spokesman, said today that the survey reflects Conservative claims that a minimum wage would be bad for business. "By an overwhelming margin, companies of all sizes and across all areas of the economy have rejected the Tory scare campaign, and adopted Labour's measured approach of establishing a national minimum wage through a Low Pay Commission."

The tax system needs a "radical overhaul", according to the Institute of Directors. It says: "Share dividends, stamp duty, tax on capital gains and inheritance tax should be abolished, with the aim of encouraging enterprise and creating wealth. It says the proposals would mean that "when a company made a profit, the Exchequer would only collect tax once".

Regulators face criticism in Commons report

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

THE regulation of energy companies is expected to face tough criticism tomorrow in an all-party Commons report that is likely to give the Labour Party fresh ammunition for its windfall tax on the utilities.

The Trade and Industry Select Committee inquiry into energy regulation will say that the companies made substantial profits immediately after privatisation. Labour is bound to seize on the independent research as it prepares plans for a windfall tax.

Weaknesses in the regulatory process, which determines the prices that can be charged by energy companies, will be highlighted in the weighty report. The committee, under Martin O'Neill, its Labour chairman, compiled the report after months of taking evidence.

The report is expected to favour the eventual replacement of the electricity watchdog and gas regulator with a

single office covering both industries. But it is likely to emphasise the importance of firms, especially as both industries are currently preparing or implementing competition in the domestic market.

Separate criticism could be levelled at Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, over progress towards competition in electricity amid persistent fears from many companies that the ambitious programme cannot be achieved by its April 1998 deadline.

Despite growing unease among some industry watchers about the effectiveness of the RPI-X formula of price setting, the committee is unlikely to recommend a switch from the method, which was devised by Professor Littlechild after the privatisation of BT. It is expected to rule out other formulae, such as those used in the US, of setting a rate of return and profit capping. RPI-X has been

heavily criticised for encouraging short-termism. While rejecting such arguments, the committee is expected to praise a contribution from Ian Byatt, the water regulator, that companies should be encouraged to participate in a voluntary reallocation of profits.

Support for a boost to the budgets of the regulators is likely, with the committee concerned that the cash-rich companies can afford the best advice and research in their battles with their watchdogs, while the regulators' offices suffer tight finances and some defection of key staff attracted by high salaries elsewhere.

The report will be the most wide-ranging independent scrutiny so far of the regulatory process. With Labour likely to want a tougher regime should it win the election, the report is likely to form the foundation of an overhaul of utility control.

Small firms show fall in confidence

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

CONFIDENCE in the economy among Britain's small and medium-sized businesses has waned since the autumn, apparently because of the impact of sterling's strength on those dependent on exports, according to the latest 3i Enterprise Barometer.

The latest survey, the only one which measures confidence among venture capital-backed businesses, shows that confidence has dropped back to August's level. There was a

marked fall in the number of companies expecting to increase profits from more than 60 per cent in the last survey to just under 50 per cent today.

Ewen Macpherson, 3i's chief executive, said: "Compared with a year ago, the economic and business climate remains strongly positive. However, many small and medium-sized companies are exporters, or suppliers to exporters, and their less optimistic outlook may well reflect the impact of the appreciation of sterling on margins."

On a positive note, the proportion of companies expecting to increase investment during the first quarter of this year remained strong at the highest level for nearly eight years. Respondents to the survey also anticipated that 1997 would be a good year for employment with almost two thirds expecting to employ more people by the end of the year than at the end of 1996.

The survey showed a distinct fall in the proportion of firms who are positive about a European single currency compared with two years ago.

New era of growth forecast

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

BRITAIN'S relative decline over 20 years has been halted and its potential for economic growth is now greater than ever, according to a new report published today by the Social Market Foundation, an independent think-tank.

Nick Crafts, the author, argues that improved industrial relations, higher productivity and better investment decisions have resulted from economic reforms. These have gone some way towards repairing the damage of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s when, he says, serious economic policy errors, such as misguided interventionism, were made. Professor Crafts takes issue with the new Labour view that low investment has been a primary cause of Britain's economic underperformance, citing instead weak productivity and a relatively weak capacity for innovation and for making effective use of technological change.



Littlewoods is believed to be looking for more than £500 million for its 135-store chain

Littlewoods stores sale to shake up retailers

By Sarah Cunningham

THE sale of Littlewoods' stores could radically alter the balance of power among Britain's clothing retailers, according to a new report.

The survey from Verdict, the retail consultancy, coincides with rumours that both Kingfisher, the Woolworths to Superdrug group, and Tesco, the supermarket chain, are believed to be considering bids for Littlewoods.

Verdict says that if Asda were to buy the 135-store chain it would increase competition at the lower end of the market, which could hit both C&A and BHS. If Next were to buy the chain, the impact on Marks & Spencer would be significant.

Littlewoods, which is privately owned, said a fortnight ago that it would consider offers for its 135 stores and it is believed to be looking to raise over £500 million.

The report shows that Littlewoods' clothing market share has risen between 1994 and 1996 from 1.6 to 1.9 per cent. Marks & Spencer's share has moved from 14.5 to 14.8 per cent and Burton's fashion multiples (including Dorothy Perkins, Burton Menswear, Top Shop, Top Man, Principles and Evans) from 4.8 to 4.9 per cent.

Next has leapt from 3.2 per cent to 4 per cent. Asda has cornered 1.6 per cent of the market (1.3 per cent) and Tesco 0.8 per cent (0.6 per cent). Among those to lose market share has been Etam which has gone from 1.3 to 0.9 per cent. BHS, which has gone from 2.9 to 2.7 per cent and C&A, which has fallen from 4.2 to 4 per cent.

The report notes that customers are willing to pay premium prices for branded items and that "the tremendous concentration, particularly in the women's wear mass market, means that life will continue to be tough for the rest of the 1990s".

No CWS bank sale, Lanica told

By Fraser Nelson

THE Co-operative Bank has warned Andrew Regan, the 31-year-old entrepreneur understood to be preparing a bid for the bank, that any takeover approach would be doomed to failure.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS), which wholly owns the bank, said it was aware of reports that Mr Regan has asked the Bank of England for permission to launch a bid, but said the bank, which has been under co-operative ownership for 127 years, was not for sale. A spokesman said: "Mr Regan would make

no headway at all in anything like this. The CWS has made it quite clear that it has no plans to sell the bank. Mr Regan can talk to anyone he so wishes, but there is simply no opportunity here."

Mr Regan, who runs Lanica Trust, has already made a £500 million proposal to the CWS for a slice of its trading operations. The CWS said it was unable to confirm whether he was now bidding to dislodge the whole Co-operative movement. Peter Rowbotham, chairman of the Co-op's retail arm, said: "Mr

Regan's tactics have shown a lack of understanding of the Co-operative movement's structure and politics. I know better than Mr Regan the views of our members, and they expect us to provide a service rather than help Mr Regan make a quick profit. As far as we're concerned, the matter is now closed and its business as usual."

The Co-operative Bank manages assets of around £4 billion in two million accounts and its insurance arm has an income of £2 billion.



Macpherson: still positive

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MARKET

More junior stocks qualify for tax breaks

TAX BREAKS offered by stocks in the Alternative Investment Market are drawing millions of pounds into the junior exchange as the end of the tax year approaches, according to traders.

More than 50 AIM companies now offer tax shelter on any profits made on the shares if it is reinvested. Traders at Winterford Securities, a market maker in all AIM stocks, say these stocks are coming under demand from investors whose capital gains are approaching the tax threshold. Rutherford Asset Man-

agement and Cripps Harries Hall, the investment houses, claim to have designed a strategy to exploit the tax breaks offered by the market while avoiding the risks.

The two have designed the Rutherford Cripps Reinvestment Relief portfolios, which store money in the longer-established AIM companies which trade

in more reliable sectors. With a minimum investment threshold of £100,000, the trust is pitching itself at the super-rich; those who have just sold a business or have come into an inheritance. The houses say that, with 266 companies, AIM has developed a core of reliable stocks that pay dividends, but do not rank with the speculative shares

that are expected to produce meteoric growth. Its choices include Country Gardens, which runs 30 garden centres in England, Shepherd Neame, England's oldest brewing company, Zengo, the fast-growing computer systems supplier, and VDC. The portfolio is now running into its third series, which plans to attract up to £10 million. The

pioneering series, launched last March, has grown its aggregate capital value by 16.7 per cent.

Under present rules, capital gains tax can be deferred, but not avoided. Gains made in qualifying stocks will not be taxed if invested elsewhere, but will be taxed if they are cashed in. While many fear that a change of government may

mean that this benefit is ended, investors will be able to claim tax relief on any shares bought before any change is made.

The market has been steady for the past two months, with the AIM index hovering just below its high of 1,400.40. The index is being weighed down by the relatively sluggish performance from the market's largest stocks: Trocadero, Celtic and Ramco Energy.

FRASER NELSON

1996/97					1996/97					1996/97					1996/97					1996/97					1996/97				
High	Low	Mid cap (million)	Price pence	Wtd %	Yld %	P/E	High	Low	Mid cap (million)	Price pence	Wtd %	Yld %	P/E	High	Low	Mid cap (million)	Price pence	Wtd %	Yld %	P/E	High	Low	Mid cap (million)	Price pence	Wtd %	Yld %	P/E		
100	100	11.20 AFA Systems	112	+12	5.1	110	140	120	4.80	100	100	11.20 AFA Systems	112	+12	5.1	110	140	120	4.80	100	100	11.20 AFA Systems	112	+12	5.1	110	140	120	4.80
101	101	21.00 AMCO Corp	101	...	...	101	141	121	4.81	101	101	21.00 AMCO Corp	101	...	...	101	141	121	4.81	101	101	21.00 AMCO Corp	101	...	...	101	141	121	4.81
102	102	10.00 AMCO Int'l	102	...	...	102	142	122	4.82	102	102	10.00 AMCO Int'l	102	...	...	102	142	122	4.82	102	102	10.00 AMCO Int'l	102	...	...	102	142	122	4.82
103	103	10.00 AMCO Int'l	103	...	...	103	143	123	4.83	103	103	10.00 AMCO Int'l	103	...	...	103	143	123	4.83	103	103	10.00 AMCO Int'l	103	...	...	103	143	123	4.83
104	104	10.00 AMCO Int'l	104	...	...	104	144	124	4.84	104	104	10.00 AMCO Int'l	104	...	...	104	144	124	4.84	104	104	10.00 AMCO Int'l	104	...	...	104	144	124	4.84
105	105	10.00 AMCO Int'l	105	...	...	105	145	125	4.85	105	105	10.00 AMCO Int'l	105	...	...	105	145	125	4.85	105	105	10.00 AMCO Int'l	105	...	...	105	145	125	4.85
106	106	10.00 AMCO Int'l	106	...	...	106	146	126	4.86	106	106	10.00 AMCO Int'l	106	...	...	106	146	126	4.86	106	106	10.00 AMCO Int'l	106	...	...	106	146	126	4.86
107	107	10.00 AMCO Int'l	107	107	147	127	4.87	107	107	10.00 AMCO Int'l	107	107	147	127	4.87	107	107	10.00 AMCO Int'l	107	107	147	127	4.87
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115	115	10.00 AMCO Int'l	115	115	155	135	4.95	115	115	10.00 AMCO Int'l	115	115	155	135	4.95	115	115	10.00 AMCO Int'l	115	115	155	135	4.95
116	116	10.00 AMCO Int'l	116	...	...	116	156	136	4.96	116	116	10.00 AMCO Int'l	116	...	...	116	156	136	4.96	116	116	10.00 AMCO Int'l	116	...	...	116	156	136	4.96
117	117	10.00 AMCO Int'l	117	...	...	117	157	137	4.97	117	117	10.00 AMCO Int'l	117	...	...	117	157	137	4.97	117	117	10.00 AMCO Int'l	117	...	...	117	157	137	4.97
118	118	10.00 AMCO Int'l	118	...	...	118	158	138	4.98	118	118	10.00 AMCO Int'l	118	...	...	118	158	138	4.98	118	118	10.00 AMCO Int'l	118	...	...	118	158	138	4.98
119	119	10.00 AMCO Int'l	119	...	...	119	159	139	4.99	119	119	10.00 AMCO Int'l	119	...	...	119	159	139	4.99	119	119	10.00 AMCO Int'l	119	...	...	119	159	139	4.99
120	120	10.00 AMCO Int'l	120	...	...	120	160	140	5.00	120	120	10.00 AMCO Int'l	120	...	...	120	160	140	5.00	120	120	10.00 AMCO Int'l	120	...	...	120	160	140	5.00
121	121	10.00 AMCO Int'l	121	...	...	121	161	141	5.01	121	121	10.00 AMCO Int'l	121	...	...	121	161	141	5.01	121	121	10.00 AMCO Int'l	121	...	...	121	161	141	5.01
122	122	10.00 AMCO Int'l	122	...	...	122	162	142	5.02	122	122	10.00 AMCO Int'l	122	...	...	122	162	142	5.02	122	122	10.00 AMCO Int'l	122	...	...	122	162	142	5.02
123	123	10.00 AMCO Int'l	123	...	...	123	163	143	5.03	123	123	10.00 AMCO Int'l	123	...	...	123	163	143	5.03	123	123	10.00 AMCO Int'l	123	...	...	123	163	143	5.03
124	124	10.00 AMCO Int'l	124	...	...	124	164	144	5.04	124	124	10.00 AMCO Int'l	124	...	...	124	164	144	5.04	124	124	10.00 AMCO Int'l	124	...	...	124	164	144	5.04
125	125	10.00 AMCO Int'l	125	...	...	125	165	145	5.05	125	125	10.00 AMCO Int'l	125	...	...	125	165	145	5.05	125	125	10.00 AMCO Int'l	125	...	...	125	165	145	5.05
126	126	10.00 AMCO Int'l	126	...	...	126	166	146	5.06	126	126	10.00 AMCO Int'l	126	...	...	126	166	146	5.06	126	126	10.00 AMCO Int'l	126	...	...	126	166	146	5.06
127	127	10.00 AMCO Int'l	127	...	...	127	167	147	5.07	127	127	10.00 AMCO Int'l	127	...	...	127	167	147	5.07	127	127	10.00 AMCO Int'l	127	...	...	127	167	147	5.07
128	128	10.00 AMCO Int'l	128	...	...	128	168	148	5.08	128	128	10.00 AMCO Int'l	128	...	...	128	168	148	5.08	128	128	10.00 AMCO Int'l	128	...	...	128	168	148	5.08
129	129	10.00 AMCO Int'l	129	...	...	129	169	149	5.09	129	129	10.00 AMCO Int'l	129	...	...	129	169	149	5.09	129	129	10.00 AMCO Int'l	129	...	...	129	169	149	5.09
130	130	10.00 AMCO Int'l	130	...	...	130	170	150	5.10	130	130	10.00 AMCO Int'l	130	...	...	130	170	150	5.10	130	130	10.00 AMCO Int'l	130	...	...	130	170	150	5.10
131	131	10.00 AMCO Int'l	131	...	...	131	171	151	5.11	131	131	10.00 AMCO Int'l	131	...	...	131	171	151	5.11	131	131	10.00 AMCO Int'l	131	...	...	131	171	151	5.11
132	132	10.00 AMCO Int'l	132	...	...	132	172	152	5.12	132	132	10.00 AMCO Int'l	132	...	...	132	172	152	5.12	132	132	10.00 AMCO Int'l	132	...	...	132	172	152	5.12
133	133	10.00 AMCO Int'l	133	...	...	133	173	153	5.13	133	133	10.00 AMCO Int'l	133	...	...	133	173	153	5.13	133	133	10.00 AMCO Int'l	133	...	...	133	173	153	5.13
134	134	10.00 AMCO Int'l	134	...	...	134	174	154	5.14	134	134	10.00 AMCO Int'l	134	...	...	134	174	154	5.14	134	134	10.00 AMCO Int'l	134	...	...	134	174	154	5.14
135	135	10.00 AMCO Int'l	135	...	...	135	175	155	5.15	135	135	10.00 AMCO Int'l	135	...	...	135	175	155	5.15	135	135	10.00 AMCO Int'l	135	...	...	135	175	155	5.15
136	136	10.00 AMCO Int'l	136	...	...	136	176	156	5.16	136	136	10.00 AMCO Int'l	136	...	...	136	176	156	5.16	136	136	10.00 AMCO Int'l	136	...	...	136	176	156	5.16
137	137	10.00 AMCO Int'l	137	...	...	137	177	157	5.17	137	137	10.00 AMCO Int'l	137	...	...	137	177	157	5.17	137	137	10.00 AMCO Int'l	137	...	...	137	177	157	5.17
138	138	10.00 AMCO Int'l	138	...	...	138	178	158	5.18	138	138	10.00 AMCO Int'l	138	...	...	138	178	158	5.18	138	138	10.00 AMCO Int'l	138	...	...	138	178	158	5.18
139	139	10.00 AMCO Int'l	139	...	...	139	179	159	5.19	139	139	10.00 AMCO Int'l	139	...	...	139	179	159	5.19	139	139	10.00 AMCO Int'l	139	...	...	139	179	159	5.19
140	140	10.00 AMCO Int'l	140	...	...	140	180	160	5.20	140	140	10.00 AMCO Int'l	140	...	...	140	180	160	5.20	140	140	10.00 AMCO Int'l	140	...	...	140	180	160	5.20
141	141	10.00 AMCO Int'l	141	...	...	141	181	161	5.21	141	141	10.00 AMCO Int'l	141	...	...	141	181	161	5.21	141	141	10.00 AMCO Int'l	141	...	...	141	181	161	5.21
142	142	10.00 AMCO Int'l	142	...	...	142	182	162	5.22	142	142	10.00 AMCO Int'l	142	...	...	142	182	162	5.22	142	142	10.00 AMCO Int'l	142	...	...	142	182	162	5.22
143	143	10.00 AMCO Int'l	143	...	...	143	183	163	5.23	143	143	10.00 AMCO Int'l	143	...	...	143	183	163	5.23	143	143	10.00 AMCO Int'l	143	...	...	143	183	163	5.23
144	144	10.00 AMCO Int'l	144	...	...	144	184	164	5.24	144	144	10.00 AMCO Int'l	144	...	...	144	184	164	5.24	144	144	10.00 AMCO Int'l	144	...	...	144	184	164	5.24
145	145	10.00 AMCO Int'l	145	...	...	145	185	165	5.25	145	145	10.00 AMCO Int'l	145	...	...	145	185	165	5.25	145	145	10.00 AMCO Int'l	145	...	...	145	185	165	5.25
146	146	10.00 AMCO Int'l	146	...	...	146	186	166	5.26	146	146	10.00 AMCO Int'l	146	...	...	146	186	166	5.26	146	146	10.00 AMCO Int'l	146	...	...	146	186	166	5.26
147	147	10.00 AMCO Int'l	147	...	...	147	187	167	5.27	147	147	10.00 AMCO Int'l	147	...	...	147	187	167	5.27	147	147	10.00 AMCO Int'l	147	...	...	147	187	167	5.27
148	148	10.00 AMCO Int'l	148	...	...	148	188	168	5.28	148	148	10.00 AMCO Int'l	148	...	...	148	188	168	5.28	148	148	10.00 AMCO Int'l	148	...	...	1			

Jon Ashworth on the restoration of Sadler's Wells to financial health

All-dancing yet unsung heroes

Professional advisers are enjoying rich pickings from the National Lottery — but not, it seems, in the case of Sadler's Wells. London's second oldest theatre is set to reopen late next year, thanks, in no small part, to the efforts of Andersen Consulting, which has guided the project from the start.

Sadler's Wells was at the head of the queue for Arts Council lottery funding and was rewarded with a grant for up to £30 million in funds. Construction and design account for most of the costs.

Little would have been achieved without Andersen, which had donated about £400,000 in professional time by January 1995 when the lottery application was submitted. There was similar largesse from Berwin Leighton, the law firm, which worked on planning applications free of charge. Clifford Chance has also done its bit.

Such generosity is not evident elsewhere, where projects such as the Royal Opera House, the Lowry Centre, and the South Bank, are generating millions of pounds in fees. Architects, engineers and surveyors have been stung by suggestions that they are cashing in. Advisers' fees on lottery construction projects tend to average 17 per cent. Based on a range of 13 to 20 per cent, fees associated with lottery projects could easily top £800 million.

All of which makes Sadler's Wells, which recently staged an all-male production of *Swan Lake*, all the more unusual. Ian Albery, the chief executive, says Andersen Consulting and Berwin Leighton have played a vital role. He adds: "Without these two firms, we would never have got near to winning a major lottery award. This was the first big piece of funding coming out of the



Staging a comeback: Sadler's Wells, which recently presented an all-male production of *Swan Lake*, received vital yet free help from its advisers to secure National Lottery funds

lottery." National Lottery grants have sparked a construction boom across Britain — about 300 people are working on site at Sadler's Wells alone — but much of the physical evidence will not appear until 1998 and 1999.

Sadler's Wells is currently a huge hole. Only part of the old auditorium remains — a home for the 'ghosts' dating to 1683, when the first of five theatres to be built on the site was opened by Dick Sadler. Andersen be-

came involved in mid-1994, long before "lottery grant" entered the lexicon. The first lottery tickets did not go on sale until November 1994. Then, Sadler's Wells was on the edge of insolvency, about £500,000 in debt, and lacking the generous grants awarded to more mainstream entities.

Hugh Morris, the Andersen partner concerned, swiftly took charge. Andersen staff were soon working with the Sadler's Wells project team on

drafting a lottery application. Mr Albery says: "It was an enormous morale booster to have someone from outside become part of the family. Many companies would not want to be associated with something that was so close to the edge."

Mr Morris says: "He [Albery] called me over and shared his dream about what could happen. It felt like something that was worthwhile doing — exciting and

innovative." Andersen personnel, he said, gained a lot from the experience. He adds: "We tend to work for very large organisations. Here, we have a whole business in microcosm. They have come out with a broadened business perspective."

Sadler's Wells made 62 of its 85 employees redundant, but a few have been re-employed at the Peacock Theatre in Kingsway — the company's temporary home until the new

theatre opens. The new building will provide about 90 jobs, and it is hoped that ushers and other part-timers will be taken back on.

The new auditorium will seat 950 or 1600 people (depending on the layout), with more for promenade performances. There will be dressing rooms for 100 artists and an orchestra pit big enough for 90 musicians. The Lillian Baylis studio theatre will seat up to 200, and enjoy greatly

improved facilities. All being well, the new Sadler's Wells will open in October 1998 — the first of the big lottery projects to reach fruition.

Andersen Consulting will get some sort of recognition — a plaque, perhaps — but expects nothing. As Mr Albery says: "A lot of consultants are making money out of the National Lottery, but there are a lot of unsung heroes. Andersen enabled this project to start and live."

THE
TIMES
CITY
DIARY

Carlton goes to Hollywood?

CARLTON Communications could soon be owner of the Hollywood studio that made *The Mask*. Word has it that the media group is involved in a consortium with Havas, the French company, to buy New Line Cinema. Owned by Ted Turner, the studio, which was itself taken over by Time Warner, is being sold in the wake of the merger. The previous frontline bidder was thought to be Chris-Craft Industries, the US broadcaster.

Gregory's goal

AFTER three years at Profitic, Tim Gregory has quit to join Garmore. The director and top-rated head of income funds left last Monday, forcing Profitic to delay the launch of an offshore UK emerging companies fund due for March 21. Gregory is expected to join Garmore in mid-April as a senior fund manager within the income team. Meanwhile, he and his wife are soaking up the sun in Australia.

Brokers' notes

A GROWING band of City whizz-kids is heading to Saint-Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe for an hour's piano tuition at lunchtime. Lucinda Mackworth-Young, a concert pianist and psychologist, has set up base in the Blackfriars church as a refuge for stressed-out City types. The daughter of Bill Mackworth-Young, a former Morgan Grenfell chairman, teaches anything from *The Beatles* to Rachmaninov.

Star pupil Mark Roberts, a jazz junkie and director at SBC Warburg, has so far mastered *Georgia On My Mind*. His colleague Audrey Wiggins has dragged her boss Geoffrey King, director of equities at Warburg, and her brother Tom, head of convertible bonds at Flemings, into joining.



Mackworth-Young: on song for City executives

Hair today...

NEWS that Varga Studio, one of Central Europe's leading animation studios, is to join forces with TV Cartoons, the UK's oldest animation house, makes Peter Rona a happy man. After 20 years at Schrodgers, latterly as head of the New York office, Rona launched the First Hungary Fund, which owns Varga, in 1989. After studying law at Oxford, he became personal assistant to Gordon Richardson, then chairman of Schrodgers and later Governor of the Bank of England. Rona incurred his wrath on ploughing \$75,000 of Schrodgers money into *Hair*, the musical. "I liked the music and it was a successful investment," Rona says, adding that it was sold soon after.

SO, Bristol & West has sent out 580 tonnes or 7,407,000 metres of paper when laid side by side — enough to stretch more than once around the world, or the equivalent of 98 trips from Bristol to Bank of Ireland's head office in Dublin. But what to do with the transfer document once you've learnt it by heart? For each document recycled at one of its branches, B&W will make a 5p donation to "Community Forests".

MORAG PRESTON

Test case to look at employment rights

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A TEST case that opens today in the Court of Appeal is the first to examine the rights of employees since a landmark judgment in the European Court of Justice last week.

The case, *Betts v Brintel Helicopters*, involves 66 staff who worked for a contractor providing helicopter services to oil rigs operated by Shell in the North Sea. Brintel lost one of its contracts, but the new contractor did not recruit the 66 employees involved.

The case is comparable with the appeal by a German cleaning worker that was decided in the European Court last week.

The Luxembourg court ruled that when a company wins a contract it does not have to employ the staff who previously did the work, provided no assets are transferred to the contractor. Until the ruling, companies that took over a

contract also took over responsibility for the employment rights of the workers who were carrying out the work.

The ruling threatens the rights of all workers employed by businesses that tender for work such as hospital services, local authorities and school services. But unions have argued that each transfer must be considered on its merits. Employers are also anxious for fresh clarification of the law because the ruling means that when an employer loses a contract it will become liable for the redundancy costs of the workers that it employed.

Consideration of the case is expected to be protracted as the judges grapple with the implications of the European decision, aware that their ruling will be an important comment on the European decision.

Sema loses £45m deal with E&Y

By FRASER NELSON

SEMA, the Anglo-French computer services group, has lost its £45 million outsourcing deal with Ernst & Young after the accounting firm scrapped plans to hand over its IT department at the eleventh hour.

The two companies have agreed that the contract, described as "model" by Ernst & Young only last year, would have been flawed by a clash of corporate cultures.

Clive Williams, the Ernst & Young managing partner in charge of the handover, admitted that the company had not handled the switch as well as it could have, and conceded that this had led to the departure of key computer operators.

Three weeks ago, Lloyds TSB abandoned its £50 million outsourcing contract with Sema three years early.

Abbey 'will not target Friends'

By ANNE ASHWORTH

ABBEE NATIONAL yesterday denied that it would pounce on Friends Provident if its bid for Scottish Amicable is rejected. A spokeswoman said that Abbey was concentrating on its offer for Scottish Amicable and had "no other named targets in mind".

Abbey is competing with the Prudential and AMP of Australia for control of Scottish Amicable, which became a bid target after the announcement of controversial demutualisation proposals. The interested parties submitted their final offers on Friday. These put a price tag of around £1.9 billion on Scottish Amicable but no exact figures are available as secrecy covers the negotiations.

The Scottish Amicable board is expected to announce its preferred bidder by the end of this month.

B&B rewards loyalty

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

BRADFORD & BINGLEY will unveil details of a new loyalty and reward scheme for members tomorrow as it publishes its full-year results.

The building society has been a strong advocate of mutualism and said last year it was giving back £1 million a week to its two million saving and borrowing members. This means profits are likely to be down 40 per cent, as are

those of the Yorkshire Building Society which publishes its results today.

Other mutual societies, including the Britannia, have introduced their own loyalty schemes based on points earned.

A spokesman for Bradford & Bingley said: "We are going to hand back a lot more money to both savers and borrowers."

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John co 154

Sorrell set for free shares

Martin Sorrell, WPP chief executive, will pick up free shares worth £4.67 million if the advertising group's shares stay above 230p by the end of trading today.

Mr Sorrell, who has already collected shares worth the same amount through the first tranche of his four-part incentive scheme, stands to gain a further £10.5 million if the shares continue to rise.

Loan book development

More developments are expected this week in the bidding for the £1.6 billion Mortgage Express loan book, put up for sale earlier this year by Lloyds TSB. Interested parties are said to include a consortium made up of UBS, Home Loans and the Britannia Building Society.

Mortgage Express, established 11 years ago, is a centralised lender selling loans through intermediaries. There have been attempts to turn round the business, making it a niche market player, dealing with the self-employed and contract workers. But it does not fit within the Lloyds TSB mortgage arm, now brought together under the C&G name. A spokeswoman for C&G declined to comment.

Cash injection from syringes

PROTOTYPE syringes that protect nurses from accidentally infecting themselves after giving injections are coming to the Alternative Investment Market, via the flotation of New Medical Technology. The company hopes to raise up to £15 million.

The syringes, named Zero-Stick, carry a needle which retracts as soon as an injection is delivered, making accidental infection impossible. They are due to go on sale in the second half of next year.

The company forecasts that safety syringes will account for half of the £1.12 billion market in four years' time.

Prestbury aim

Prestbury Leisure, a Manchester company that designs and sells sportswear and leather jackets, plans to join the Alternative Investment Market next week valued at £252 million. John Edelson and Jonathan Lyons, its founders, will share a stake worth £1.42 million after the flotation. The company is raising £770,000 to fund expansion.

Beleaguered Shell takes stand on human rights

By CARL MORTISHED

SHELL, the Anglo-Dutch oil company, is expected to announce today a big change to its business principles, incorporating for the first time a statement of support for fundamental human rights.

The multinational company, which came under attack last year over the disposal of the Brent Spar and its activities in Nigeria, has rewritten its statement of general business principles.

The new version is expected to state that the oil company has a duty to support human rights, has proper regard for the environment and a commitment to sustainable development.

Shell was taken by surprise over the scale of the opposition to its plans to dump the Brent Spar. The company believes that its role in Nigeria, where it was accused of environmental damage, has been misrepresented and misunderstood.

Concern about Shell's activities has prompted several church-based pension funds to table a resolution to the annual meeting of Shell Transport & Trading, demanding more disclosure about Shell's impact on the environment.

The Shell business principles are designed mainly for internal use; the original document deals extensively with business ethics and prohibits the taking or giving of bribes.

However, the decision to adopt highly emotive concepts, such as human rights, into a code of conduct for its staff is likely to arouse controversy, both inside and outside the organisation.

The company was heavily criticised by human rights activists for not taking a stand in Nigeria against the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Ogoni leader. Shell claims that it voiced its opposition privately and that its business principles prohibit Shell companies from interfering in politics. However, the new document is expected to exclude that prohibition and to recognise a responsibility to express support for human rights.

Shell has been in talks with Pire, other shareholder lobby groups and various non-governmental organisations since May last year over the new principles but they are likely to fall short of demands from Shell's critics: the document will give as much weight to Shell's responsibility to its shareholders.

Shell's initiative will be closely watched by other multinationals, including British Petroleum, which is coming under fire from environmentalists for its activities in the new oil provinces west of the Sheddards. It has also been accused of links with the military in Colombia, allegations denied by BP.



Ken Wiwa, son of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the writer and Ogoni leader who was executed

Japanese join the jam in direct motor cover

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

CUT-THROAT competition, an overcrowded market and falling premiums have done nothing to deter a Japanese company from launching into UK direct motor insurance this week.

The new insurer, Hastings Direct, backed by Chiyoda of Tokyo, will join more than 50 other direct insurers battling for market share in an industry plagued by falling premium rates and rising claims.

But analysts have questioned whether there is room for another telephone insurer in a saturated market. AA Insurance Services has already predicted that smaller direct insurers will merge or be taken over this year because many of them are having to write business at a loss to attract new customers.

Chiyoda, Japan's fourth largest motor insurer, has set up a UK headquarters in

Bexhill, East Sussex, and will officially begin trading on Wednesday. The project has the blessing of Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Hiroaki Fujii, the Japanese Ambassador, who will be attending an opening ceremony.

Their support is a measure of the importance of the new company in an area struggling with rising unemployment. Hastings Direct already employs more than 100 staff and plans to increase that to 300 over the next three years, which would make it the largest private sector company in the local area.

After a pilot scheme in January, its managing director, Jerry Kendall, 42, a former Lloyds syndicate underwriter, aims to spread the start-up costs, which are less than £10 million, over the next three years. He aims to attract 65,000 policyholders this

year and to have written more than £75 million of business and have 250,000 policyholders by the end of the decade.

He said: "We will be cost effective and aim to post a small profit this year."

The announcement comes only days after the UK's composite insurers gave warning that the motor insurance market was still fiercely competitive. Independent Insurance said it saw no sign of an upturn in premium rates paid by motorists, while the composite insurers said they would try to impose rate rises but could not be sure whether they would stick.

Mr Kendall said: "We believe the motor market will grow from 10 million to 20 million by 2000 and that the proportion of people buying direct insurance will shift from 30 per cent to 50 per cent of the total market."

Forsyth awaits court ruling

By JON ASHWORTH

THE latest chapter in the Polly Peck International saga is expected to draw to a close today. Elizabeth Forsyth, freed on bail in January after serving ten months of a five-year prison sentence, returns to the Court of Appeal to hear a panel of judges deliver their ruling.

Mrs Forsyth, 60, was convicted a year ago of handling £400,000 in funds purportedly stolen from PPI by Asil Nadir, fugitive founder of the fruit-and-electronics group. She was released six weeks ago, after the judges hearing her appeal ruled that the five-year sentence was excessively harsh.

Lord Justice Beldam, sitting with Mrs Justice Braithwaite and Mr Justice Mann, made clear at the opening of the appeal that Mrs Forsyth would not be returning to prison. The former banker and one-time aide to Mr Nadir is appealing against conviction and sentence. Develop-

ments will be watched closely by Mr Nadir, who is in self-imposed exile in northern Cyprus. He fled Britain in May 1993 while awaiting trial on fraud and theft charges. Any quashing of Mrs Forsyth's conviction could imply that he did not steal £400,000 from PPI — as set out in the charge — and allow him to mount a fresh legal challenge. The Serious Fraud Office has said it will press on with the case against him.

Lord Justice Beldam, sitting with Mrs Justice Braithwaite and Mr Justice Mann, made clear at the opening of the appeal that Mrs Forsyth would not be returning to prison. The former banker and one-time aide to Mr Nadir is appealing against conviction and sentence. Develop-

EU to issue further works councils directive

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRUSSELS is to bring forward new proposals requiring companies in every European member state, including the UK, to establish works councils for consulting with their employees. Even those with as few as 50 employees could be affected.

The move, likely to be announced in May by Pádraig Flynn, the EU's Social Affairs Commissioner, is expected to infuriate Conservatives, especially Eurosceptics, and business leaders who argue that works councils damage the flexibility of companies.

The Commission is expected to introduce the proposal under the EU social

chapter. Britain's social chapter opt-out negotiated by the Prime Minister at Maastricht, would prevent its being applied to the UK, but its provisions would apply if a new Labour government abandons the opt-out and signs up to the social chapter, as it is committed to do.

Large, multinational companies based in Britain are already having to comply with an EU directive requiring them to establish European-style works consultative councils if they have the specified number of employees in two or more EU member states. The Brussels move appears to have been spurred by the decision by Renault, the carmaker, to close its

plant in Vilvoorde, in northern Brussels, with the likely loss of 3,100 jobs.

Commission officials said it had been taken without consulting the company's workforce, as required by EU law. The Commission is expected to propose that all companies above a specified size should establish information and consultation arrangements. While the draft directive is not expected to specify that these are European-style works councils, the expectation in Brussels is that works councils will be adopted and introduced. The Commission is under pressure from the European Parliament and elsewhere to set it at 50 employees.



Pádraig Flynn is expected to announce the plans in May

Payment of Dividend

The 43rd Annual General Meeting of our shareholders passed the resolution to pay a dividend for the fiscal year 1995/96 of DM 8.00 per share of DM 50.00 par value.

Payment will be effected against presentation of coupon No. 9.

Payment on DM 10.00 Deposit Certificates will be effected at the rate of DM 1.60 against presentation of coupon No. 36.

Both payments are subject to deduction of 26.875 % of German Withholding Tax (including solidarity surtax). United Kingdom Income Tax will be deducted at the rate of 5 % unless claims are accompanied by an affidavit. German Withholding Tax exceeding 15 % is recoverable by United Kingdom residents. The Company's United Kingdom Paying Agents will, upon request, provide the appropriate form for such recovery.

Paying Agents in the United Kingdom are: SBC Warburg, N.M. Rothschild & Sons.

The net amount of dividend in respect of the DM 50.00 shares is payable at the rate of exchange on the day of presentation.

Claims concerning DM 10.00 Deposit Certificates should be lodged at National Westminster Bank PLC, NatWest Investments Counter, c/o NatWest Markets, 1st Floor, 135 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3UR, on special forms obtainable from that Office.

United Kingdom Banks and Members of the Stock Exchange should mark payment of the dividend in Space No. 36 provided on the back of the certificate. All other claimants must complete the special form and present this at the above address together with the certificates for marking by the National Westminster Bank PLC. Postal applications cannot be accepted.

The net payment in respect of DM 10.00 Deposit Certificates will be made in sterling at the rate of exchange on or shortly after the due date.

Duisburg, March 1997

Board of Management



THYSSEN AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 37

NEXAL

(a) Characterised by the imposition of servitude as a penalty on a defaulting debtor. Roman law, from the Latin *nexus* or *necum*, a bond or obligation. "It is probable that in early times, plebeian law recognised no debt except that created by the nexal contract."

PIASSABA

(b) A stout woody fibre obtained from the leaf-stalks of two Brazilian palm-trees, *Attalea funifera* and *Levopodium Pissaba*, and imported for the manufacture of coarse brooms, brushes, etc. 1858: "That fibre, resembling whalebone, called in commerce Piassaba fibre. Monkey Grass or Para Grass."

NIMMING

(c) Taking bribes, or consuming. From the common Teutonic verb *nim* to take. "Those Nimming Neds and Cronk-finger'd Jacks of the typographical Tribe."

PALKEE

(a) A palanquin, or covered litter or conveyance, usually for one person, used in India and other Eastern countries, consisting of a large box with wooden shutters like Venetian blinds, carried by four or six (rarely two) men by means of poles, projecting before and behind. From the Portuguese and last Indian vernacular. "The greater nobility are carried in a palkee, which looks very like a hammock fastened to a crooked pole."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1... Rxc1 and if 2 Qxc1 Qxc2 is made while 2 Rxc1 Nf3 wins the white queen.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.09	1.93
Austria Sch	20.05	18.55
Belgium Fr	56.84	54.54
Canada \$	2.279	2.119
Cyprus Cyp£	0.842	0.787
Denmark Kr	10.91	10.11
Finland Mk	8.67	8.02
France Fr	9.54	8.89
Germany Dm	2.86	2.85
Greece Dr	444	418
Hong Kong \$	12.97	11.97
Iceland Lkr	120	100
Ireland Pt	1.07	0.99
Israel Shk	5.86	5.01
Italy Lira	2626	2651
Japan Yen	210.90	194.90
Malta	0.652	0.597
Netherlands Gld	3.198	2.968
New Zealand \$	2.42	2.20
Norway Kr	11.44	10.64
Portugal Esc	283.00	264.50
S Africa Rd	7.62	6.82
Spain Pta	241.00	224.00
Sweden Kr	12.87	12.07
Switzerland Fr	2.45	2.27
Turkey Lira	210500	196500
USA \$	1.890	1.590

Rates in small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar
1.6012 (-0.0040)
German mark
2.7212 (-0.0378)
Exchange index
97.2 (-0.9)
Bank of England official close (Aprn)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
2930.2 (+9.9)
FTSE 100
4424.3 (+4.0)
New York Dow Jones
6935.46 (-65.43)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
17923.64 (-275.10)



Following the DIVIDEND DECLARATION by Ford Motor Company (U.S.) on 9 January, 1997 NOTICE is now given that the following DISTRIBUTION will become payable on or after 17 March, 1997.

Gross Distribution per unit	1.92500 Cents
Less 15% USA Withholding Tax	0.28875 Cents
	1.63625 Cents
Converted at \$1.625	\$0.01006923

Claims should be lodged with the DEPOSITARY, National Westminster Bank PLC, NatWest Investments Counter, c/o NatWest Markets, 1st Floor, 135 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3UR on special forms obtainable from that office.

United Kingdom Banks and Members of the Stock Exchange should mark payment of the dividend in the appropriate square on the reverse of the certificate.

All other claimants must complete the special form and present this at the above address together with the certificate(s) for marking by the National Westminster Bank PLC. Postal applications cannot be accepted.

Dated 17 March, 1997

Maudling, Barber, Lawson. Put any of these names of Conservative Chancellors before the word "boom" and you evoke not only a period in our history but also a distinctive national economic mood — overweening confidence and bravado, followed by disillusion bordering on despair.

Just a few months ago, the prevailing smart opinion was that the name "Clarke" was soon to be added to this list: 1997 was going to be a bumper year, with all the usual after-effects, including sharply rising inflation and much higher interest rates.

But not any more. Even the Bank of England is busy back-tracking from last autumn's frantic calls for higher rates. This Wednesday's retail sales figures will probably confirm that, although consumer spending remains healthy, there is no spending splurge. Whatever happened to the Clarke boom?

Some of the answer may be that the strong pound has taken the edge off the corporate sector's confidence. But the real effect of this is yet to come. Some of the answer is perhaps that consumers have come to fear higher interest rates and, perhaps, also, the prospect of higher taxes under Labour.

The simple truth, though, is that the Clarke boom was always a creature of imagination. For officials in the Bank and the Treasury it was the stuff of nightmares. They had failed to spot the Lawson boom

Whatever happened to the Clarke boom?



imitation of the Lawson boom. But some commentators thought they could see that something — the "windfall" payouts emerging first from Tessa maturities and then from building society takeovers. These would be the 1990s equivalent of financial market deregulation. Tot up the amounts to be received by consumers and you reached some staggering numbers — the equivalent of 10p, or even 15p, off the standard rate of income tax.

But this analysis was missing something. The magic ingredient in the 1980s was not the deregulation but the boom psychology. It pervaded everything and everybody —

mortgage borrowers and mortgage lenders, property developers, retailers, commentators and officials, and, of course, Government ministers, who committed the fatal error of believing their own publicity. It was like a mad fever.

Nineties psychology is different. The people who make up the economy that the authorities seek to forecast and control had learned the same lesson from the Lawson boom — "never again". They now see house prices rising nicely, though not spectacularly. Anyway, they may subsequently fall back.

At just over 4 per cent, pay is now rising slightly faster than it was but this is still much slower than at any time since the 1960s. At this rate, too large a loan or too high a price paid for a house, will not be easily sloughed off. And in the future, pay rises may turn out to be even lower.

Meanwhile, feelings of job insecurity remain rife. They are not governed by the official jobless numbers but by individuals' daily experience of the startling brutality of the sharp economic changes affecting the world of work, and by their sense of helplessness in the face of them.

This change of attitude shows up clearly in saving and borrowing behaviour. In the Eighties boom, consumer spending rose much faster than personal incomes. The gap was made up by borrowing and dis-saving. The proportion of personal incomes devoted to saving fell from over 13 per cent in 1980 to a mere 6 per cent in 1988. By contrast, the current healthy growth in consumer spending is being driven by increases in incomes. Last year, the proportion of incomes devoted to saving remained roughly constant at above 11 per cent.

So in this environment the overwhelming response to the windfall payouts is to save them. They are predominantly regarded as non-repeatable capital sums to be kept for that rainy day. This epitomises the difference between now and the late Eighties. Then, such windfalls might have been used to support a monster loan, or simply splashed out in the apparent assumption that next year, and the year after, there would be some other, as yet unimaginable, bonanza.

Some of this new-found sanity is surely the result of lingering memories of the pain of the last recession. In time these will fade. But most of it, I suspect, is the result of living without the illusions created by high inflation. This will endure. And the result is another surprise for forecasters and wary officials alike — no Clarke boom, no need for a sharp rise in interest rates and no bust afterwards.

RADIO CHOICE

A brutal homecoming

The Monday Play: Capricornia. Radio 4, 7.45pm.

Australian cinema has long since come out of the shadows and established an international reputation, but Australian theatre still provokes something of "what's that?" response on this side of the world. *Capricornia*, however, is already familiar to theatre buffs here and is bound to attract wider acclaim with this radio production, made in conjunction with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and recorded in Perth. The story is of a sophisticated man who returns to the Northern Territory where he was brought up. As a boy he believed his mother was a Japanese princess and his father a war hero; as a man he discovers the brutal truth.

Sounding the Century. Radio 3, 9.35pm.

This programme in Radio 3's cultural survey of the century is subtitled *The 60s — Paperback Writers* and is worth hearing if only for interviews with Saul Bellow and Camille Paglia, from which you will realise that the theme is writers. One can see why Bellow is present but Paglia, a fashionable figure of this decade rather than any previous one, is harder to place in the 1960s. She claims, however, to be very much a product of that era. More interestingly, the decade in which the death of the novel was first promulgated seems to have been chronicled much better by writers than by the electronic media that was supposed to usurp them. But perhaps such predictions were merely premature.

Peter Barnard

Adam Jones runs the rule over a fledgeling among MBA schools

Oxford's 'baby' means business

The ongoing controversy over Walford's proposed £20 million gift to Oxford University for a "new" business school has eclipsed one important point. The university already has one.

The financier's donation, which has been delayed by wrangles over a site, is to expand the existing School of Management Studies rather than to create something from scratch. Said wants a Master of Business Administration (MBA) course to compete with the best US schools.

After plans to develop playing fields in the city centre were voted down by dons, there is now a race to find a suitable site by late June.

But the foundations for a world-class MBA have been laid already, and not without opposition of their own. Last October the School of Management Studies launched the Oxford MBA, in addition to undergraduate management teaching. It accepted 49 students from around the world for a one-year course, half the length of many competitors.

Professor Anthony Hopwood, the director, says the average GMAT score, the measure of cognitive ability used by many graduate schools, is high at 650. The intake includes an array of Rhodes Scholars, following in the footsteps of Bill Clinton, and high-flyers from China, Pakistan and Turkey.

There is also a former head of the foreign exchange regulation directorate at the National Bank of Belarus, and a second lieutenant in the US Army. She graduated with distinction from West Point, the elite military academy. But there are some second-class degrees from UK universities, too, backed up by more impressive job histories.

One of the youngest students is Clyde Seepersad, 23, from Trinidad. Having studied in Barbados, he worked for Trinidad's Ministry of Finance. Mr Seepersad's public service background would please the university traditionalists — and their anti-commercial bias.

But a flick through a book of student CVs reveals a number with the investment banking background they would be less keen on, as well as a lack of women. Even by Oxford's historic standards, five women



Managing the news: Sayra Can, left, who is one of only five women enrolled on the Oxford MBA, with Jinhua Gao, a fellow graduate student

out of 49 is bad. To an outsider observing one Monday morning lecture, there is a palpable hollowness when the talk turns to the glass ceiling that holds back women's careers.

And when a male student jokes that to see the glass ceiling from his elevated position, he's probably being more truthful than he realises. It's something that worries Professor Hopwood. But he says the number of women accepted was proportionally more than those who applied.

In choosing Oxford, some students were taking a risk. In the US, and now here, MBAs are passports to huge starting salaries in finance or industry.

Reputation is everything and a fledgeling course may be a gamble. It's not cheap either. The course fees are £13,000 for the year, with an additional £2,000 to be paid to one of the colleges. For their part, the students are certain that the Oxford cachet will more than compensate

particularly overseas. As such, they are sensitive to erroneous newspaper reports that suggest the course is not a real part of the university. The brand name must be protected.

The integration of the MBA with other faculties at Oxford enables it to borrow academics from departments such as politics; a huge plus denied to stand-alone business schools.

The launch party made use of one of Oxford's non-academic assets; it was held at Le Petit Blanc, the new Raymond Blanc restaurant, where the Conran-designed interior is a far cry from the Radcliffe Infirmary, the 18th-century building that houses the course. Elegant as the Radcliffe facade may be, students have to pick their way past patients in the corridors. The juxtaposition of the two — management and health — begs to be used as a metaphor for the post-Thatcher NHS.

The facilities are neat and modern, though. Students can plug their laptop computers

into desks in the lecture hall and download teaching material. And on the evidence of just a couple of lectures, the teaching can be a good deal more playful than some traditional courses.

When explaining the concept of "groupthink", David Faulkner searches for an example. It refers to the way workers can retreat into dull conformity, particularly under a domineering leader. Mr Faulkner, a former McKinsey consultant, settles on the ministers who served under Baroness Thatcher. "If they stopped agreeing," he says, "they were back on the back benches." The students take the point: "groupthink" is bad.

It seems like a very Oxford way to teach business. The university has had a fraught relationship with the former leader, culminating in the refusal to offer her an honorary degree. Incorporating its enemy into cautionary case studies would be a neat way of throwing punches after the bell. But Mr Faulkner's exam-

ple is tongue-in-cheek, as is his reference to the managerial war cry of "Let's kick arse... or whatever they say in America." This may not be the stuff to stave off snobbish comments in senior common rooms from a few academics unconvinced of the rigour of management studies.

There are those who believe some of the opposition to the new building plan was fuelled by this traditionalist distrust. But Oxford can take heart from a US business school. Jeffrey Garten, Dean of the Yale School of Management and a former Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade under Bill Clinton, says: "There are some great parallels between what has happened at Oxford and Yale. The Yale School of Management was set up 20 years ago amid tremendous controversy."

For many at Yale, founded in 1701 by Connecticut clergymen, a business school did not

fit in with its traditional public service ethos. "Yale was anti-commercial until very recently," he says.

Mr Garten admits that it has taken the best part of 20 years to find equilibrium, adopting a more "liberal art" approach emphasising links to other departments and to public service. But there is work to be done before Oxford is viewed as an integral part of the premier league of international management schools. It will have to overcome sceptical comparisons with America's established big-hitters. European schools, such as Insead in Fontainebleau, France, must also be challenged.

Mr Garten, an interested party but one whose international trade experience embraces a huge swathe of the industrialised world, is politely damning about the current UK threat: "When I hear about competition from abroad I never hear about the British schools."

Class of '97: you have been challenged.

Dark Skies:
Tonight 10.00



FREQUENCY GUIDE RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.9. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8. LW 198. 720. RADIO 5. LIVE. MW 693. 908. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648. LW 198. (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100.102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8. MW 1197. 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053. 1080. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

Little women, ladies in waiting, girls on top

There is a gender paradox about television and it was pointed out by Janet Street-Porter at the weekend. If you look at the best comedies of recent times, which include *Men Behaving Badly* and *One Foot in the Grave*, the key to the hilarious awfulness of their male characters is that they are weak and silly, traits which are thrown into relief by the behaviour of the women characters, who despair with dignity.

Clearly the viewing public, including men, accept this portrayal as reflecting something of their own experience. Men generally agree that women have more common sense, behave with more maturity and have a greater sense of responsibility.

These might be regarded as important characteristics in, say, a television executive, yet nearly all of that breed are men. But Street-Porter did not quite complete the point. Men are happy to commis-

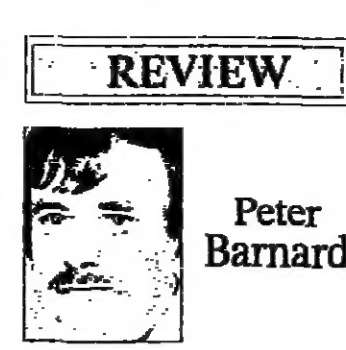
sion comedy series in which their gender is made to look ridiculous because they have the self-confidence born of holding power. Secure people can afford to laugh at themselves.

A Night In With The Girls (BBC2, Saturday and Sunday) was an interesting if overlong double-header about women in television. From the early post-war days to the present, in that time, more has changed on the sunlit surface than in the underlying rock strata.

Street-Porter, Esther Rantzen, Anna Ford, Joan Bakewell (who all spoke in the programmes) and others have become household names as screen personalities, yet in recent times there has not been a woman as powerful in the executive corridors as Grace Wyndham Goldie 40 years ago. Producers such as Verity Lambert and writers such as Lynda La Plante hold considerable sway, but the territory where schedules are

made remains under male control. And under male patronage, in all senses of the word. When Goldie moved from radio to television the team around her was known as "Grace's boys". Rantzen recalls how her own team at *That's Life* became "Esther's boys", yet no such epithet is applied to male-run departments. Rantzen made the related point that when *Spitting Image* wished to show Margaret Thatcher's dominance, her puppet was dressed in a man's suit.

However, there is an incriminating downside to every argument. Both Goldie and Rantzen did tend to surround themselves with men, leaving them open to the charge that they did little to promote the cause of women other than themselves. But television's treatment of women has improved a hell of a lot. Sylvia Peters, a continuity announcer from the 1950s, recalled how, when she



married a floor manager, the couple were given a week's wedding leave... but each was given a different week.

The best drama of the weekend had a strong woman and indeed a fictional, male BBC executive who was shown briefly listening to the corporation's head of gobbledegook, Family Money (Channel 4), a four-part serial which began last night, had me riveted from the

start, even though I was close to the end of part one before a character inadvertently explained what the piece was all about. "The point is," she said, "it is entirely her own or is it family money she intends to throw about? Well, that's the point." Oh, I see.

The woman throwing money about is Fran Pye, brilliantly played by Claire Bloom. Pye is a gentle matriarch who has gone a bit funny in the head, having been mugged while trying to save a man from being beaten to death after a car accident. There are one strand of the plot is to do with Fran's widow of a diplomat, selling her house and the offspring wondering if they might get a slice of the proceeds. The other strand concerns Fran's gradual recall of the mugging: is that chap living on a canal boat at the back of her home the one who hit her?

Family Money is based on Nina Bayden's book. Both the adapta-

tion by Ruth Carter and the direction of Renny Rye have a rhythm which holds the attention and the acting is first-rate from top to bottom. Bloom stands out because she is so assured, such a screen presence. She won a Bafta for her performance in the BBC's *Shadowlands* and will be a candidate again after this.

My heart sinks when something turns up described as a "feel-good fantasy" but alliterative hype should not put us off *Early Edition*, which arrived with a pilot episode on Sky on Saturday (it is already on TV). *Early Edition* is that rare bird, a good show based on a daff idea: examples of the reverse are easier to find.

The programme is American and concerns a young broker in Chicago who gets a copy of the *Sun-Times* delivered to his door every day by a cat. It is not today's

edition, but tomorrow's. Having this afternoon's racing results this morning may be a licence to print money but Gary Hobson (Kyle Chandler) soon discovers that the advantage has the potential for nightmares. There are elements of *Groundhog Day* and *Back to the Future*, among countless other antecedents, but *Early Edition* is good fun in its own right.

A final word for Comic Relief (BBC1 and BBC2, Friday). I grazed here and there rather than munching the whole feed and thoroughly enjoyed *Prime Cuts* in which Robbie Coltrane and Helen Mirren spoofed Fitz and Tension in a mini-drama cum song and dance act. But quite why *Comic Relief* chooses to risk soiling so much splendid work by introducing adolescent smut, albeit late in the evening, is beyond me. Poverty and malnutrition should embarrass us; there is no need for the means of their relief to do so.

REVIEW

Peter Barnard

CHOICE

Ray Mears's World of Survival

BBC2, 8.30pm
The "wilderness expert" is in Western Samoa this week but not to celebrate that tiny country's extraordinary prowess in the rugby field. Mears is concerned with more basic things, such as finding food and building shelters. Anybody who is likely to appear on *Desert Island Discs* in the near future should tune in and take note for here are perfect answers to the inevitable questions about catching fish and building shelters. The Western Samoans are not above using chainsaws and electric tools when it suits them but mostly they rely on the traditional ways which have served them well for centuries. Here are step-by-step guides to making a house resistant to resist the local typhoons, how to dig a hole to produce a canoe and wrapping a stone in leaves to catch an octopus.

Cutting Edge: Jilted

Channel 4, 9.00pm
Once again there is no shortage of ordinary people willing to face the cameras and relive some of their most embarrassing moments. Tonight's subjects have all been jilted and it is a more painful experience than you might think. Poor Chris was told by his bride-to-be, Fiona, on the morning of the wedding that she could not go through with it. He took an overdose and spent what would have been the first night of his honeymoon in hospital. Nobody else in the film reacted that badly but there is plenty of heartache on display, even after the passage of many years. Dorothy was engaged to a French sailor, whom she first met as a pen friend at school. The wedding was set for April 1947 but he failed to show and she never saw him again. We follow her to France as she visits his grave and tries to discover why he let her down.

This Life

BBC2, 9.45pm
The drama about young flat-sharing lawyers who spend more time in the bedroom than the courtroom returns for a second series. The show has been much praised for its unflinching portrayal of twenty-something angst, though this last seem to have more of their share of sexual hang-ups. As we renew acquaintance with Milly, Egg, Anna, Miles and Warren, it is of how little has changed. Like all soap operas, *This Life* has the knack of spinning out storylines almost to infinity. At this rate the fatuities will still be trying to resolve their relationships well into the 21st century. By then it will be time for John Major's exciting new pension scheme, or his Labour equivalent, though our lawyers will probably have made so much money that they will not need to depend on it.

Walden on Callaghan

BBC2, 11.15pm
Brian Walden's closely argued assessment of the last Labour Prime Minister is based on a paradox. It was James Callaghan's supposed political strength, his ability to understand and deal with the opposition, that proved to be his downfall. Walden traces the theme back to the twenty Callaghan experienced during his childhood. This made him see the union movement as a struggle of the down-trodden against exploitation and, in later years, to be fiercely protective of union power. Walden argues that the crucial year in Callaghan's career was 1969, when he opposed *In Place of Strife*. This gave the unions the signal that they could rely on him as an ally and led to the winter of discontent that swept Labour from power. The irony was that in contributing to the defeat of Callaghan, the unions ushered in Margaret Thatcher.

HTV

6.00am GMTV (E456746)

9.25 Chain Letters (T) (4384098)

9.55 Regional News (T) (5176185)

10.00 The Time, The Place (T) (5176185)

10.30 This Morning (E456746)

12.20pm Regional News (T) (7148982)

12.30 News (T) and weather (E456746)

12.55 High Road (T) (643456) 1.25 Home and Away (T) (1739872) 1.50 Murder, She Wrote (T) (1503017) 2.20 Savannah (T) (8636185)

3.20 News (T) (6351271)

3.25 Regional News (T) (7701712)

3.30 Tots TV (5511861) 3.40 Rainbow Days (5512814) 3.50 Gooly (7416497) 4.05 Sooty's Amazing Adventures (2323814) 4.20 Snap (T) (1040456) 4.45 Art Attack (T) (5088543)

5.10 Sorted: Family Life New series of the magazine for teenagers (E233659)

5.40 News (T) and weather (5088592)

6.00 Home and Away (T) (T) (380307)

6.25 HTV Weather (E233659)

6.30 HTV News (T) (6037)



Judith Chalmers visits Jordan (7pm)

7.00 Wish You Were Here? Includes the top three holiday destinations chosen for the Tourism for Tomorrow awards. Plus, Judith Chalmers visits a historical farming village in Jordan which has been restored by locals. Sheryl Simms discovers some of the lesser-known delights of Majorca and John Carter travels through Acapulco and Mexico City (T) (4727)

7.30 Coronation Street Fraser offers Liz the chance to begin a entirely new life. Tia confirms Jack's suspicions with a heart-felt confession (T) (291)

8.00 World in Action Hard-hitting investigative reports on current issues (T) (3475)

8.30 Kavanagh QC: Ancient History A highly respected family doctor is prosecuted for his alleged involvement in Nazi war crimes during the Second World War (T) (72901)

10.00 News (T) and weather (46017)

10.30 Regional News (T) (662384)

10.40 Nash Bridges A bus transporting a group of prisoners to court is hijacked in downtown San Francisco (T) (180294)

11.35 So You Think You're Irish Barry Murphy introduces stand-up routines and sketches performed by top Irish comedians in a star-studded charity gala. The featured acts include Ed Byrne, Brendan O'Carroll, Owen O'Neill and Dylan Moran, plus a special item by the winners of Father Ted (E67920)

1.00 Not Fade Away (46789) 2.00 Planet Rock Profiles (60031) 2.30 Football Extra (700012) 3.15 Club Nation (T) (761498)

1.15 So You Think You're Irish World in Action (T) (19050) 5.00 Coronation Street (E6692) (T) (T) 5.30 News (55789)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (E463456)

1.50 Blue Heelers (E103017)

2.45 Breakaways (E931291)

2.50-3.20 High Road (E519104)

5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (E233659)

6.25-7.00 Central News (E73253)

11.35 So You Think You're Irish (E77307)

12.55am Not Fade Away (E550573)

1.55 Planet Rock Profiles (E652673)

2.30 Stand and Deliver (E551789)

4.00 Central Jobfinder '97 (E166944)

5.20 Asian Eye (E058031)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:

12.20pm-12.30 Illuminations (E7148982)

12.55-1.25 Gardener's Diary (E463456)

1.50 Ruth Meets the Entertainers (E11503017)

2.20 A Country Practice (E262659)

3.10-3.20 Breakaways (E084630)

5.10-5.40 Home and Away (E233659)

6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (E0949)

10.30 Westcountry News (E67776)

10.45-11.40 Nash Bridges (E192123)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:

12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (E463456)

1.50 Getaways (E11503017)

2.20-3.20 Blue Heelers (E636185)

5.10-5.40 Home and Away (E233659)

6.00 Meridian Tonight (E72)

6.30-7.00 Country Nights (E07)

10.30 Meridian News and Weather (E67776)

10.45-11.40 Nash Bridges (E192123)

5.00am FreeScreen (E6692)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:

12.19pm Anglia Air Watch (E7167017)

12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (E463456)

1.50 Blue Heelers (E167901)

2.50-3.20 Jungle on Your Doorstep (E519104)

5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (E233659)

6.23 Anglia Weather (E267017)

6.25-7.00 Anglia News (E73253)

10.29 Anglia Air Watch (E15388)

10.30 Anglia News and Weather (E67776)

10.45-11.40 Nash Bridges (E192123)

S&C

Starts: 6.00am Sesame Street (E1720) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (E17678) 9.00 Bowditch (E5494) 9.30 Yagellon (E0974) 12.00 Right to Reply (E6630) 12.30pm Ellen (E3272) 1.00 Slot Meltrich (E1075) 1.30 The Man from Colorado (E1948) with Glenn Ford, William Holden and Ellen O'Hara. The tale of a brutal fight (E519340) 3.20 Fresh Pop (E151443) 3.30 Collectors' Lot (E185) 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (E20) 4.30 The Last Gardens of Helligan (E104) 5.00 S Pump (E583) 5.30 Countdown (E456) 6.00 Newydd (E5043) 6.30 Hens (E3618) 6.55 Jeopardy (E7378) 7.00 Robo-y Cwm (E7455) 7.25 Y Byd Ar Bedwar (E47920) 8.00 Ma' Ifan (E1017) 8.30 Newydd (E7104) 9.00 I Dot (E748) 10.00 Sgonio (E263) 11.00 NBA Race (E7814) 12.00 Film: Closing Numbers (E1953) with Jane Asher, Patrick Power and Tim Woodward. Controversial drama (E2678) 1.55am Dhwedd (E318863) 4.00 Yagellon (E2064) 5.35 Dhwedd (E630234)

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Entertainment UK (E659) 7.30 Roseanne (E607) 8.00 Roseanne (E607) 8.30 Mervyn's Flying Circus (E1814) 9.00 Cheers (E4184) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814) 4.00 The 60101 (E1814) 4.30 The 60101 (E1814) 5.00 The 60101 (E1814) 5.30 The 60101 (E1814) 6.00 The 60101 (E1814) 6.30 The 60101 (E1814) 7.00 The 60101 (E1814) 7.30 The 60101 (E1814) 8.00 The 60101 (E1814) 8.30 The 60101 (E1814) 9.00 The 60101 (E1814) 9.30 The 60101 (E1814) 10.00 The 60101 (E1814) 10.30 The 60101 (E1814) 11.00 The 60101 (E1814) 11.30 The 60101 (E1814) 12.00 The 60101 (E1814) 12.30 The 60101 (E1814) 1.00 The 60101 (E1814) 1.30 The 60101 (E1814) 2.00 The 60101 (E1814) 2.30 The 60101 (E1814) 3.00 The 60101 (E1814) 3.30 The 60101 (E1814)

SCRUTINY 41

Scardino makes her debut in the City

BUSINESS

MONDAY MARCH 17 1997

NO REPEAT 46

Roger Bootle examines Clarke's 'boom'



SWT to explain reduced services

BY FRASER NELSON

STAGECOACH, the transport group that runs the South West Trains network, was preparing its case over the weekend as it prepared for Wednesday's meeting with the House of Commons Transport Select Committee.

Brian Cox, managing director of South West Trains, has been summoned to explain why the company has struck 39 services a day from the network's timetable over the last six weeks.

South West Trains serves the lines from Waterloo to Reading, Gatwick, Weymouth and Portsmouth among others.

He will be asked to assure ministers that the company, which is being paid £54.7 million in its first year of running the franchise, will have resolved the fiasco by the end of next month.

It was forced into the cancellations after it made 70 drivers redundant through a cost-cutting programme, leaving insufficient staff to run the trains. It cannot make up the shortfall until new drivers are familiar with every new route they will be asked to work on — a procedure that can take up to seven weeks.

Mr Cox is expected to be asked to tell the committee how much more training will be required before the service will be restored to normal level. If it fails to meet the standard set by Opra, the rail regulator, it will be charged up to £1 million and risks losing its seven-year tenure of the franchise.

While Stagecoach has one of the highest profiles of the new rail operators, it is one of the least active. After winning the South West Trains franchise over a year ago, it failed in every other one of its bids apart from the Isle of Wight.



Piers and peers: Coutts and Co, the Queen's bank, opens its first office on the South Coast tomorrow in Bournemouth. Richard Horder, the branch's manager, relaxes on the beach

SFO to move over bank's black hole

BY ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

ROBERT WARDLE, assistant director of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), the vetting officer of potential cases for investigation, will this week step up his monitoring of the £90 million "blackhole" at NatWest Markets.

The SFO, which is likely to draft in officers from the City of London fraud squad if the NatWest case is formally adopted, has yet to be given sufficient evidence by NatWest that trades in the interest rate options market by Kyriacos Papouis, the former trader, involved criminal behaviour.

There is no suggestion at present that Mr Papouis, who left NatWest Markets last December and who subse-

quently resigned his position at Bear Stearns, the US securities house, acted for personal gain. Therefore, the SFO is unlikely to press ahead with an investigation based on an alleged conspiracy to defraud the banking group.

If it remains the position, the SFO could be expected to launch a formal inquiry only if it emerges that the data input into the investment banking group's computers or trading books amounted to making misleading statements or false accounting.

Any final decision to take on a NatWest investigation, in what is an already overcrowded caseload, will be taken by George Staple, director of the SFO. On the civil side, the NatWest affair is being jointly investigated by the Bank of England, which is the prudential supervisor of NatWest Bank and is responsible for the direct supervision of London's capital markets and the Securities and Futures

Authority, the City watchdog for individual traders and their supervisors and senior managers.

NatWest's internal investigation, assisted by Coopers & Lybrand, the accountant, and Linklaters & Paines, the City law firm, will this week continue to piece together the thousands of derivatives trades executed over a number of years by Kyriacos Papouis, the former trader.

Mr Papouis's girlfriend, who also works at NatWest Markets, has been sent on paid leave, although she is not thought to have played any part in the affair.

If the SFO does adopt the NatWest case an experienced in-house lawyer will be assigned to head the investigation with back-up from forensic accountants and financial investigators.

City of London Police officers are already seconded to the SFO's ongoing inquiries into the £1.8 billion Sumitomo

Corporation copper scandal and the Peter Young affair at Morgan Grenfell.

Last week NatWest Markets announced that £77 million would be written off against profits from the first six months of the current financial year.

Some £5 million will come from existing provisions and a further £8 million from holding back unpaid bonuses. Of this sum Martin Owen, chief executive of NatWest Markets, gave up £200,000 of his £500,000 bonus for last year. Together these sums will cover the £90 million.

But *The Times* has learnt, however, that almost all of the unpaid bonuses, except that of Mr Owen, has been clawed back from just two senior executives. These are believed to be Jean François Nguyen, head of debt derivatives, and Christophe Lanson, head of interest rate risk management, both of whom have been suspended during the inquiry.

Union to help police inquiry into pensions

BY ROBERT MILLER

A SENIOR trade union official last night offered to pass hundreds of files to Scotland Yard to assist a preliminary investigation that starts this week into the £4 billion personal pensions mis-selling scandal.

Bill Day, pensions officer for GMB, the general union, which has issued hundreds of writs through Ringrose Wharton, the Bristol law firm, on behalf of members fighting for compensation from life companies, told *The Times*: "We would be very happy to give our files to the police."

Mr Day added: "We have built up over a period of time quite a dossier which leads us to believe that much more than casual mis-selling took place. Our view is that a massive fraud has been perpetrated on the British public."

The Metropolitan Police Company Fraud Squad has opened a file on the personal pensions mis-selling scandal. However, a well-placed source at Scotland Yard said this weekend that the investigation was "in its very early days

yet". For more than two years, John Edmonds, GMB general secretary, has campaigned for the Serious Fraud Office to launch an investigation.

Mike O'Brien, Shadow Economic Secretary, criticised the Government for not tackling the problem earlier and for failing to ascertain whether widespread fraud had taken place. "As a criminal lawyer I know that the longer you delay an investigation and subsequent prosecution the colder the evidence gets."

Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said yesterday: "If something comes to light in the course of the work being done by the City regulators, it should be investigated by the relevant authority. But redress and compensation to the victims should be the priority."

More than 600,000 victims were wrongly advised to leave generous occupational schemes or not to join them in the first place, including police officers, nurses, firefighters, miners and public sector workers.

Howden takeover expected by City

BY FRASER NELSON

HOWDEN, the Scottish engineering equipment maker, could become the subject of a takeover bid this month, City sources believe.

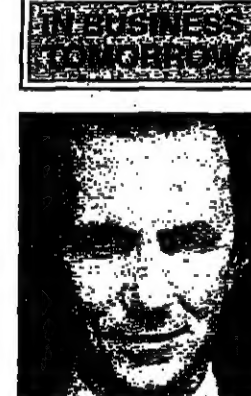
The company, which produces industrial fans and drilling equipment, has seen 20 million of its shares change hands in the last fortnight, five times the normal trading activity. Last week's frantic trading saw 11.5 million Howden shares traded (14 per cent of the company), including 7.2 million on Friday alone.

It is understood that Howden, which last October clinched a £36 million deal to supply tools to drill the longest tunnel in China, is seen as an attractive target for any company wanting to move into drilling equipment.

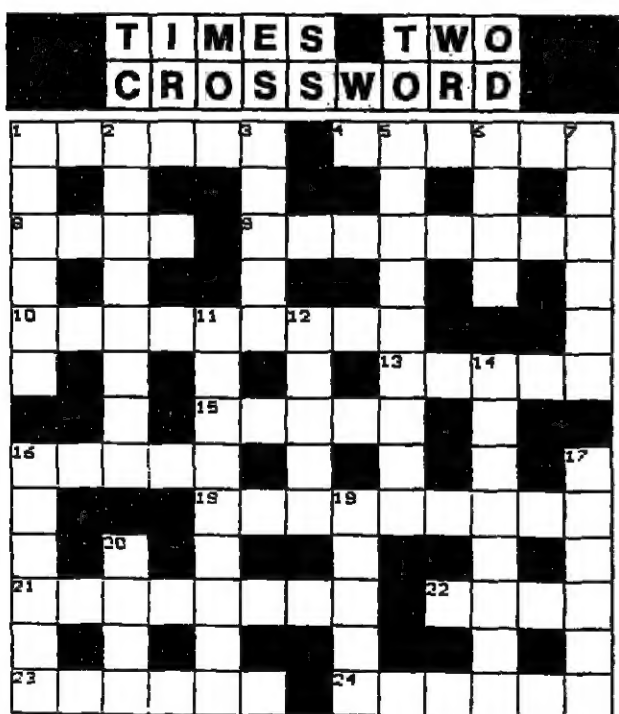
The engineering sector has been rife with takeover activity in recent months, with F&K's failed bid for Newman Tunks, Triplex Lloyd's failed bid for William Cook and Fairley's bid for Burnfield. Analysts forecast still more consolidation this year.

Although Howden's shares stand at a high of 83p, they are still at a 40 per cent discount to the market. This month two of the company's directors increased their family stake.

Howden last returned flat interim profits of £11.1 million, after a £600,000 hit from the strength of sterling. It is expected to return £38.5 million for the full year to April against the £42.9 million it made last time.



ANATOLE KALETSKY examines the link between the economy and the general election



No 1043

ACROSS

- 1 Assertion: maxim (6)
- 4 Self-assurance (6)
- 5 Glass medicine-holder (4)
- 8 Suicide (pilot) (5)
- 10 Purge of emotions (9)
- 13 Track down: strap for horse (5)
- 15 Untrue (5)
- 16 Be profane: promise (5)
- 18 Go past (target, destination) (9)
- 21 Fulfilment (8)
- 22 Journey: stumble (4)
- 23 Dwell (6)
- 24 Obstruct: nearer the back (6)

DOWN

- 1 Contrivance (6)
- 2 Severely rebuke, punish (8)
- 3 Creator (5)
- 5 Pagan woman officiant (9)
- 6 By mouth (4)
- 7 Simple task: light wind (6)
- 11 Offended, insulted (9)
- 12 Southing ointment (5)
- 14 (Vehicle) fined with protection (8)
- 16 Wave-ride (6)
- 17 Insensible state (6)
- 19 Cattle-farm (US) (5)
- 20 Agitation (over trifles) (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1042

- ACROSS: 1 Test tube 5 Find 8 Balloons 9 Spar 11 Junta
12 Quarry 13 Gambit 15 Doltish 18 Synonym 19 Ample 21 Rite
22 Arifice 23 Warm 24 Jambozee
- DOWN: 1 Tally-ho 2 Salon 3 Two Nations 4 Bunker 6 Imperial
7 Dare 10 Out on a limb 14 Monster 16 Precede 17 Omeria
18 Straw 20 Prior

PRICES AND CIRCULATION: UK DELIVERY TO TIMERS READERS (NET OF WORLD AND POSTAGE) - STERLING: £5.99 (US \$10.99) (US \$12.99) (US \$14.99) (US \$16.99) (US \$18.99) (US \$20.99) (US \$22.99) (US \$24.99) (US \$26.99) (US \$28.99) (US \$30.99) (US \$32.99) (US \$34.99) (US \$36.99) (US \$38.99) (US \$40.99) (US \$42.99) (US \$44.99) (US \$46.99) (US \$48.99) (US \$50.99) (US \$52.99) (US \$54.99) (US \$56.99) (US \$58.99) (US \$60.99) (US \$62.99) (US \$64.99) (US \$66.99) (US \$68.99) (US \$70.99) (US \$72.99) (US \$74.99) (US \$76.99) (US \$78.99) (US \$80.99) (US \$82.99) (US \$84.99) (US \$86.99) (US \$88.99) (US \$90.99) (US \$92.99) (US \$94.99) (US \$96.99) (US \$98.99) (US \$100.99) (US \$102.99) (US \$104.99) (US \$106.99) (US \$108.99) (US \$110.99) (US \$112.99) (US \$114.99) (US \$116.99) (US \$118.99) (US \$120.99) (US \$122.99) (US \$124.99) (US \$126.99) (US \$128.99) (US \$130.99) (US \$132.99) (US \$134.99) (US \$136.99) (US \$138.99) (US \$140.99) (US \$142.99) (US 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